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THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

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The Browning nobody read

City politics in America

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The micropublishers

John Houghton, prior of the London Charterhouse from 1531, painted by the Spaniard Francisco de Zurbarán in the following century. Under Houghton's inspiring rule the Charterhouse saw "a last flowering, a winter rose, of English medieval monachism", wrote David Knowles, in whose Bare Ruined Choirs *(329pp. Cambridge University Press. £6.50) the portrait is reproduced. The book is an abridged and illustrated version, completed by the author before his death, of the third volume of his* The Religious Orders in England *(1959). It will be published next Thursday.*

Fiction: Sean O'Faolain, Amos Oz, Sexton Blake

Commentary: Verlaine in Lincs, Honest Ulstermen

Fury and elegance

By John Bayley

ANNA AKHMATOVA :
Requiem and Poem Without a Hero
Translated by D. M. Thomas
78pp. Elek. £3.95.

No woman in English poetry has written like Blake, or like Eliot. Nor, for that matter, could either Blake or Eliot have written with the conscience and the fury of a sibyl, the status of a society beauty, the experiences of a divorced wife, terrorized widow and persecuted mother. No other woman poet has had the opportunities given to Anna Akhmatova, and it may be that such opportunities—the kind not vouchsafed to Emily Brontë, or to Sylvia Plath—are what a great female artist requires and can make best use of. Akhmatova was a very unselfconscious poet in many ways; she had qualities of elemental force, uterance haunted and Delphic; yet these went together with elegance and sophistication, even a certain kind of mirror-gazing and a cunning which is *chétif*, or, as the Russians say, *zloi*. She is not in the least like Blake or Eliot, and yet these are the English poets—different as they are—who offer some sort of parallel with her finest work. The incongruity in coupling such names shows how exceptional is her own poetic being.

Her individuality was not likely to recommend her to the men at the top—nor did it. At the time of her expulsion from the Writers' Union, Zhdanov called her "a nun and a whore". Sound archetypes for a great poet, observes D. M. Thomas, in the introduction to his translation of her two greatest poems, *Requiem* and *Poem Without a Hero* (his is the first complete version of the latter in English).

But though it is nice to think the party hack uttered praise without knowing it, such a description [illegible] she has as a poet more in common with what are—in a degraded form—Soviet ideals: restraint, correctness, propriety. Her poetry is dignified in the grandest sense without pretending to dignity, an equivalent in art of what she called the severe and shapely spirit of Russian orthodoxy.

Blok, or Yeats, would have been delighted to see themselves as archetypes of nun or harlot, libertine or sage—it would be a part of the methodical build-up of their poetic selves. She was herself in a more absolute sense. Though full of admiration, her attitude to Blok was as to some sort of unstable demon or actor in a seductive but dangerously wicked farce. The majesty of her own being seems to declare: "One doesn't behave like that"; and she says the same thing in the same tone to state tyranny, to the horrors of the *Yezhovshchina*, to all the destructive convictions of inhuman conceit. She knows—none better—that offence comes, but woe unto them by whom it cometh, whether it be the perverse and deliberate invocation of madness and violence, or the policy of *cruelty and persecution in the name* of some abstract good. A curious feature of *Poem Without a Hero*, which irritated some of her friends and well-wishers as it did the priests of the new regime, is the resurrection and explation of old St Petersburg sins as if they were one with the new torments of Leningrad.

The central part of the poem's "triptych" bears the epigraph "My Future is in my Past", a version of the device of Mary Queen of Scots: "In my beginning is my End." Thomas's notes point out that she refers to Eliot as the source for this, and only discovered that it was Mary's motto just before her death. Probably she knew of the *Four Quartets*, and their provenance in besieged London. Certainly the passage in "Little Gidding" that begins "In the uncertain hour before the morning" gives a more direct impression of the tone and movement of her poem than any translation can do.

One does not believe like that; one does not do such things. If one is tempted, if one is compromised or guilty, one is haunted by *the dead and devoured* by conscience. To meet throughout life, as in a mirror, one's image or double—an idea which constantly recurs in her poetry—is not for her a way in which the artist escapes himself or by which he profits: such an identification may be with a great fellow-spirit in suffering, as was Akhmatova's with Mandelshtam, but it was more often like a warning, an admonition of sin and shortcoming. The role of conscience in her poetry reminds us how unfamiliar such a possession is to most poets, whose natural tendency in the Nietzschean and modernist era is to say that "such things are my business, and I shall do what I like with them". Though [illegible] over in poetry, but conscience, its precursor and attendant, can and does.

It figures largely, and strangely, in *Poem Without a Hero*, whose title itself suggests the collapse of a Nietzschean world in which men of action, or the hero as poet and seer, could play a part. Its denizens, including Blok, including the poet herself, are in one sense poor creatures, not the heroic figures into whom an intense vision of the past transmutes so many. For this is a poem about remorse, and about a past "in which the future is cotting".

Thus although it is arbitrary to attach a single life and its interior staging, as Akhmatova does, to the ordeal of Russia in the revolution, to the years of terror and invasion, the theme of remorse—for one and for all—unites these things as they could not have been united in any artificial poem in which such events were directly lamented or celebrated. She refused to be "melted to a state hymn"; hers is not a "public" poem (as is, for example, Margarita Aliger's moving *Spring in Leningrad*.

Poem Without a Hero was more than twenty years in the writing, and appeared to the poet, during that time, as a recurrent and inescapable malady. On its smaller scale *The Waste Land* had the same characteristic of a visitation, painful to suffer, more painful to evade. And another phenomenon is significantly true of both poems: they derive their status from the reality of the *fait accompli*. Though critics may seek to demonstrate after the event their underlying "unity" and so forth, such poems only now seem so inevitable and so public because they made a total success of being so private and so arbitrary.

As might be expected of Akhmatova, however, *Poem Without a Hero* is extremely literal, as concerned with place and event as a Hardy poem, and closely connected to the poet's life in present St Petersburg. A child of the professional middle classes—her father was a naval architect—she grew up in the capital at a time when its artistic life was at its most febrile and brilliant, the height of the "Silver Age", not only in poetry but in painting, ballet, music; and her poem makes full choreographic use of these forms. She married the poet Gumilev, and together with Mandelshtam they began the Acmeist movement, which best defines itself negatively as a reaction against Blok and the Symbolist poets, a kind of classicism which their admiration for Dante links with the nascent notions of Hulme and Eliot. Her poetry at this time has an unstylized purity, sometimes simplistic, absorbed in what might be *called the moral nature of things*, and asserting its own kind of confidence from them.

But Akhmatova was also assiduously of the fashionable artistic coterie. Like other poets she recited her poems at the Stray Dog, a cabaret decorated by the leading stage designer Sudelkin, whose wife Olga Glebova-Sudelkina performed there in productions such as Belayev's *Blundering Psyche*, and danced in the Faust ballet half naked and wearing horns, a "goat-legged nymph" as Akhmatova calls her. Blok was a revered member of the group, as was Mikhail Kuzmin, a poet and homosexual whom Akhmatova deeply distrusted, and who makes appearances, though briefly, as the evil genius in her poem.

He was probably in love with Vsevolod Knyazev, a young dragoon officer and apprentice poet, the Petrushka of the poem and its "senseless sacrifice", who she himself romantically devoted to the fascinating Sudelkina. When he discovered that Blok—handsome, famous, and a great womanizer—was his successful rival for her affections, he shot himself on the landing of her flat, after seeing her return home in the small hours with Blok, as related at the end of the poem's first section. By that time estranged from her husband, Akhmatova was sharing the flat with Sudelkina, and she herself went round to the young officer's quarters to look for compromising evidence, as the poem suggests: she leaves the place "on tip-toe". She refers to herself as Sudelkina's "ancient conscience", and is obsessed with her as a double or mirror-image of herself, an empty-headed, amiable but amoral beauty. A photograph in the French *edition bilingue* of the poem shows the two statuesquely handsome women *together, with clasped hands*.

After the war and the terror and starvation of the revolutionary years Sudelkina fled to Paris; Akhmatova stayed in what had become Leningrad. The poems of this period are grim, spare and laconic, but it was not till the mid-1930s, when the Yezhov terror became and Mandelshtam was arrested, that the full horror of what was in store became apparent. Her son Lev Gumilov was arrested, solely because of his father's name; sent from Siberia to fight in the war, he was then rearrested and not finally released till after Stalin's death. At the time of his first arrest Akhmatova joined every day for months the queue waiting outside the prison for news of relatives, and from this experience came the poem *Requiem*, written between 1935 and 1940, or rather committed during that time to memory and to the memories of friends—it was not published until 1963, and then outside Russia and without the author's consent.

The theme of *Poem Without a Hero* came to her, she tells us, on a night in December 1940. Much was written before the German invasion and the siege. She was later evacuated with other artists, including Shostakovich, to Tashkent, where the poem was completed. There is a certain irony in this Soviet solicitude for intellectuals, which probably saved her life: but it is consistent with persecution. They were an asset of the state, and the state, since Pushkin's time, had set a high value on the power of poetry. Her popular status grew in the war years and became an embarrassment to the authorities, who withdrew permission for her collected poems to be published and subjected her to increasing degrees of persecution, including constant escort by the secret police. After Stalin's death came a degree of rehabilitation, a visit to the West, a great and growing reverence on the part of all intellectuals and lovers of Russian verse, for whom she was its voice and conscience.

The action of *Poem Without a Hero* opens on New Year's Eve 1940, the moment when its conception took place. The scene is a house on the Fontanka canal, a white room full of mirrors, in which instead of the expected guests, the author is visited by shadows from the year 1913, disguised as masquerers":

From childhood I have feared masquerers.
It always seemed to me the evil omen
A kind of extra shadow
"Without face or name", has slipped in
Among them. . . .

The phantoms play roles from the old St Petersburg world, notably Don Juan, from Mozart and Byron, Pushkin's Stone Guest, one of Blok's most famous poems "The Steps of the Commander", and from Molière's version, which was staged in 1910 by "Dapertutto"—Vsevolod Meyerhold. The multiple references are typical of the poem's method, but—as in *The Waste Land* again—the clarity and tranchancy of the verse makes its immediate impact without any need of notation.

These roles were associated with Sudelkina, and Blok is there "in a motley stripes of a milepost", an image that recalls through Pushkin's poem about devils in a snowstorm the blizzard of *The Twelve*, the third correlative being the remarks of a Russian soldier in striped black and white. Then a parenthetic passage refers to the actual "expected guest":

Guest from the future, will he really come
Taking the left turn across the bridge?

That was the way to Akhmatova's apartment near the Fontanka; and though he is not named, the "guest from the future" is Isaiah Berlin, who visited there shortly after the war and talked all night, giving her encouragement at a time when the state, which during the war had maintained her as if she had been some potentially valuable asset or machine, had apparently decided to phase her out and consign her to silence.

An intermezzo gives snatches of talk and laughter from the past—in the next scene a voice is reading in Sudelkina's bedroom. Knyazev haunts the movement, his cry "I am ready for death" coinciding with Mandelshtam's words to Akhmatova at the time of his arrest:

Is this the guest from behind the mirror,
The shape that flitted past the poem?
Is the new moon playing a joke, or
—Between the cupboard and the stove—is
Somebody standing again?

His shape now that of the self-hanged Kirillov standing "in a terribly strange manner" in *The Possessed*. But for all its macabre images (the capital is called Dostoyevskin) the poem here is full of a vital gaiety and conveys the same animated celebration that Pushkin did in his "sad tale", "The Bronze Horseman" a line from whose prologue—"I love you, Peter's creation"—is the heading of Akhmatova's epilogue.

Part 2 is headed *Reshka*, i.e, "tails", the obverse of the coin, with a further significance of perfect and, in its variant, of prison bars. An editor complains about the poem and its obscurities; the author disowns interpretation and the idea of state or public recognition. Her intimacies will remain her own, and her poem's, and the muse informs *her that* the poem has no traditional romantic ancestry, no kinship with the heroes of the nineteenth-century pantheon. The third and last part begins with a brief prose evocation of Leningrad under siege, breaking off into poetry, spoken by the author's voice, 7,000 kilometres away. At no point does the poem become "public", even when the poet remembers her *friends*

who stayed to perish
In an icebink of waters, a glitter
of spices

and not even when in flight she sees below the road to Siberia, along which her son and so many others have been driven. The end is a vision of Russia herself, "knowing the hour of vengeance", walking eastward before the poet, with clenched hands and dry eyes. "Vengeance" refers to the German invaders, but the image of suffering Russia has a wider significance. This is confirmed, it seems to me, by the more singly and conventionally wartime" conclusion written and then taken out (the poem was never "finished", but intention seems clear here) in which "young Russia" is seen emerging from Ural and Altai, and advancing, like a mirror-reflection, to the faithful defence of Moscow.

Such an account cannot by itself carry conviction of the poem's authority and grandeur; like most such masterpieces it is about as non-international as could be, and it is saturated, besides, in the cultural references of generations of Russian art. *Requiem* is much more simply generically moving; a number of reasonably adequate versions have already appeared, and D. M. *Thomas's, to my mind the* best so far, has much less to persuade us of than in the case of *Poem Without a Hero*. Persuasion *is the point*. Audon, characteristically honest, said that he could not feel Mandelshtam was a great poet, "because the translations I have seen don't convince me of it". Thomas's version of *Poem Without a Hero* is not of course itself a great poem; but it conveys us feel the original is one, and that is a remarkable achievement. For the translation is itself a good poem; in writing poetry as a translation, *rather than translating poetry*, Thomas shows that it need not be, as Nabokov said, "a parrot's screech, a monkey's chatter".

Yet his is far from a Lowell-type "imitation". He quite occludes his own personality and style; he has profound reverence and affection for the original; and like the politician (except that the translator deals in the art of the impossible) he knows he is compelled to endless compromise in which the absolute of poetry will dissolve. Lowell, greatly egocentric and as honest as Audon, made no bones about his intention to create a different kind of absolute—"as if it were written now and in America". Thomas's, "Akhmatovan" poetry, cannot be Akhmatova, but it does not seek to create an English equivalent. Although by intention not always accurate—sometimes it departs quite far from her actual words—it never takes over or transforms her sense and tone, as Lowell does in his translation of *Requiem*. The poem opens with a statement of biblical simplicity, a literal version; Akhmatova was proud of her refusal to emigrate and her power to bear witness in the time of terror:

Not under the vault of a foreign
sky, not under the shelter of
foreign wings
I was with my people then, there,
where my people, unhappily,
were.

Lowell's version:

I wasn't under a new sky,
the birds were old familiar birds.
They still spoke Russian.
Russian words.

This takes us right out of Russia, as far as William Carlos Williams's comment about "plain American which even cats and dogs can understand". Staying at home in this way produces jarring effects, and calls up quite different expectations in the reader. Thomas, like his original, is lovely poetic:

Not under the vault of a foreign heavenly-
cope, and
Not canopied by foreign wings—
I was with my people in those hours,
There where, unhappily, my people
were.

That at least gets in the sculptured commas, though it cannot manage the deliberate emphasis of the inflected forms (*byla, byl, narodom, narod*). Thomas remarks that he is not happy with his "heavenly-cope", "which is literally and metrically close to the Russian but sounds stranger in English". English verse since *the eighteenth* century can rarely sound both simple and wholly "poetical". A compact tradition and the flexibility of the language perpetuates this possibility in Russian, as it does the classical metres for which Brodsky complains that few translators with pretensions of their own even try to find a near equivalent. "Sky's vault"—*nebosvod*—is pure Pushkinian poetic diction, and notice, through him, in Akhmatova: a paradox of dependence and independence for which again there is no English parallel. (In *Poem Without a Hero she even follows Pushkin*

Anna Akhmatova

in indicating the omission of a stanza, or part of one, in order to formalize ironically the effect of cuts by the censor.)

Robin Kemball's version tries bravely to "render the sense the spirit and the music . . . while *strictly retaining the form*":

No, not for beneath some foreign
sky then,
Not with foreign wings to shelter
me,—
I was with my people then, close by
them,
Where my luckless people chanced
to be.

Metrically this is excellent, but "close by them" weakens the sense just where it should be strong, suggesting that the poet was around but not of them, as the next line incongruously implies that *Russians just happened to be* in Russia. This is unfair but of course the whole thing is unfair, for great poetry only comes into being by making the fullest use of the properties of one particular language. As Thomas points out, the "same" metre tends to emerge not the same, partly because the circumlocutions make it sound odd, and also because even iambs and spondees sound different in a different linguistic context. This is crucial in *Poem Without a Hero*, which has a remarkable metrical form; it should be monotonous and over-emphatic, and *in a faithful* English reproduction would certainly be so. With great delicacy Thomas has echoed its liturgical power and subdued it, though still recognizable, to a calm but forceful English rhythm, that has the flexibility of the original and something of its haunted utterance.

Quantity is as unreliable in analyzing Russian metre as it is for English—accent and syntax diversifies and overrides it—but in her masterpiece the Akhmatovan line consists roughly of two anapaests and an amphibrach, or two with an iamb, a combination probably never used before in the modern era and certainly not on this methodical scale. Reproduced, a section from the "lyrical digression", which evokes the phantom of the real twentieth century approaching pre-war St Petersburg comes out something like this:

Since up every street there was
drumming,
Since past every porch it was
coming
The shape feeling its way in
gloom,
Gusts tore the *placards off the*
palings,
Smoke spun its dance over the
railings
And the lilac flowers smelled
of the tomb.

Increasing tension, as in the account of the suicide, adds a third rhyming line to the pattern:

And unsureless in his distressing
Whose time to live quickly is
lessing,
Who only for death asks God's
blessing
And who will be ever forgot;
He strays by her window benighted
As the street-lamp indifferently
lighted
His form with its liviest tone.
He attends. And most slender of
muskers
To have trodden the boards
"from Damascus."
She comes back at last . . . not
alone!

That is reasonably accurate, as a reproduction of sense and metre, but it can only remind an English reader of Edgar Allan Poe, or even "The Dong with the Luminous Nose". It shows how right Thomas is that "the same" metre tends to emerge *not* the same: translated in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* sense". Russian can sustain this astonishing movement, for 800 lines or so, with hypnotic variation and unremitting intensity. And though the poem's strong and straightforward theme—retribution and explation—resounds in the rhythm like the hoofbeats of Peter's steed in *The Bronze Horseman*, one never feels that the movement is taking over and determining the sense, as one does with Swinburne, or in *Locksley Hall*, or even in such an apparently cerebral poem as "Le Cimetière Marin". Eliot, in his brilliant use of a comparably hypnotic metre in "Little Gidding", is careful not to go on too long.

In English, *moreover, as can be* seen from several lines of my version, such a metre can often be "assumed", crudely, in two ways, which here does nothing to enhance its authority (a subtle rather than crude example is the last line of *Paradise Regained*—"Home to his mother's house private returned"—where the iambic deliberation has the ghost of an anapaestic outrider mounted on it).

Thomas's parallel metre, however necessarily muted, is both durable and eloquent. Compare his version of the tricky three rhyming lines and a fourth, in the suicide episode:

His agitation cannot be sounded
Whose whole life is running
aground and
Whose only prayer's for a
boundless
Forgetting and forgotten
sleep.

That gets the despair of the original, and its half-rhymes reproduce the fluid and loss positive rhyming of Russian. Of course its sedulous skill cannot convey Akhmatova's simple atavism, plunging excitement and drooping pathos—in fact the very qualities, bizarrely enough, that Lear *did* get into "The Dong with the Luminous Nose". And the "difficulties" of the poem seem more formidable in English, more saturated and obscure, because the reader is not carried on by the force of the narrative. Sudelkina, for instance, had been taking part in a show at the Stray Dog called *The Road from Damascus*, which is the point of the reference to her return—a return *into* sin, the opposite of Paul's—but the bent of the Russian makes this evident sublimitally, without the need of pausing and pondering.

Not that the poem is anything but arcane. Akhmatova calls it a Chinese box "with a triple base", and its numerological patterning is as complex as its references to real people, events, works of art. But it is essentially a voice poem, in that tradition which Pushkin stylized in the figure of the "Improvisatore" in *Egyptian Nights*, who denies any idea of how complex verse comes to him suddenly, rhymed and in regular feet, so that it can be instantly declaimed. Like so many Russian masterpieces the poem has the form of an open secret, at once spontaneous and enigmatic. "I frequently hear of certain absurd interpretations of *Poem Without a Hero*", writes Akhmatova in her foreword. "And I have been advised to make it clearer. This I decline to do. It contains no third, seventh, or twenty-ninth thoughts. I shall neither explain nor change anything. What is written is written."

And she ends with a dedication to "his first audience"; the fellow-citizens who died in Leningrad during the siege, which reveals the deep source of her simplicity and her greatness, both in this poem and in *Requiem*. "Their voices I hear, and I remember them, when I read my poem aloud, and for me this secret chorus becomes a permanent justification of the work."

Drums along the Hudson

By Norbert Lynton

HAROLD ROSENBERG:
Art on the Edge
303pp. Secker and Warburg. £6.

Discovering the Present
Three Decades in Art, Culture and Politics
336pp. University of Chicago Press. £5.

Almost a quarter of a century has passed since Harold Rosenberg named Action Painting and thrilled us with his brand image of the American painter venturing all in a now-or-never engagement with a blank canvas. You can't hang an event on the wall, countered Mary McCarthy; but what Rosenberg celebrated had little to do with logic and much more with contradicting the habits of American and European art in terms not unlike those thrown by Senator Hugh Butler of Nebraska at another McCarthy: "I look at that fellow, I watch his smart-aleck manner and his British clothes . . . and I want to shout, 'Get out! You stand for everything that has been wrong with the United States for years!'" Rosenberg provided his own, typically neat and unforgettable analogy: on the one side General Braddock's Redcoats going by the European book; on the other, native coonskinners, sniping from behind trees, ignoring the rules.

Rosenberg was not, of course, the only critic to welcome Abstract Expressionism, but his identification with it was uniquely close. It was as though this loose movement had arisen in answer to the pessimistic note sounded by Rosenberg and Robert Motherwell as editors of their single-issue magazine *Possibilities* (Winter 1947): "It can be to some extent the artist's protest against the collapse of meaning upon which his parents have the extremest faith in sheer possibility". The new painting that appeared in the galleries in 1948 was to Rosenberg the perfect expression of revolutionary individualism, evidence that the individual need not be "seized upon in mid-motion by the depersonalizing machine of capitalist society, or by the depersonalizing machine of the world-wide opposition to that society. The American painter discovered a new function for art as the action that belonged to himself". The left-wing poet and man of letters rejoiced in recognizing these answers in paint, and doubly rejoiced to see that the answers were so thoroughly American—kin to those of Whitman, Melville, Eakins, Albert Pinkham Ryder et al., coonskinners all beneath the skin.

The honeymoon did not last long. The shout of passionate individualists who quickly learned to do the actions that belonged to themselves; the emergence of a more controlled and ideographic Abstract Expressionism (Rothko, Gottlieb, Newman); the Pop eruption and also its opposite, the cool, genteel and often vacuous art that Greenberg dubbed Post-Painterly Abstraction; all these were evidence that the depersonalizing machines were not to be evaded for long. Rosenberg's first collection of critical writings, *The Tradition of the New* (1959), hums with excitement; the next, *The Anxious Object* (1964), already sounds like a rearguard action; *Artworks and Packages* (1969) shows him wading rather crossly through a flood of contradictory works and claims, and generally condemning what seemed to be being promoted as a virtue and what he, adopting Baudelaire's words, presented as the besetting sin of the new kinds of art: "the vice of banality, to which those painters are especially prone [who] consider it a triumph if they can contrive not to show their personalities". The ultimate banality resides in mistaking the artist for art—and the artist mistaking himself for art—so that the art object is rendered invalid while "the artist himself is blown up to gigantic proportions", and that is the theme of several of the essays in *The De-definition of Art* (1972).

How far art has travelled since 1948, and how little Rosenberg, is made poignantly clear in his most recent collection, *Art on the Edge*. Much of the book is negative. The modern movements of the past hundred years have petered out. Current art writing is "largely opportunistic sponsorship" and "moralistic drumming". Critics produce, paturing like spotted linoleum or dried milk stains" and it fell to the greatest painter of our time, "while great men of the past such as Miró are misrepresented in exhibitions and texts to make them appear as proto-Americans. In one of the essays, "Shall these Bones Live?" Rosenberg concludes that art of real value will now be found only in the "dead art movements", killed when the spotlights of publicity moved on, while the little vanguards that now make their brief appearances upon the art stage are false, unnecessary vanguards, responses neither to a recognized crisis nor to a previous achievement. Now "dead art movements are the normal life of art; all that can be expected of them is good painting". James Brooks and William Baziotes are adduced in evidence.

There is a lot here that one might be inclined to agree with even if it does not add up to much of a book. The shift from experiencing art to

Harold Rosenberg by Saul Steinberg, from Discovering the Present.

adopting this or that art ideology has given licence to all sorts of absurdities in the galleries and the magazines. "Ritualistic drumming" is not a bad phrase for the noise that goes with them, except that so much of it is heavily pseudo-philosophical and thus a sort of high-pitched drone rather than a tense and tingling beat.

Artist after artist is apotheosized in harangues that are rooted in legalistic summaries of modern art history where slanted definitions constantly supplant the actual things. For artists to abandon the making of art objects has a kind of logic about it, but art has never flourished by following the paths of logic, and there certainly are occasions when one fears that art might be drowning in the pool of Narcissus.

Yet one has reasons for losing patience with Rosenberg's complaints. One is his hiding the fact that these essays are reprinted. A note in very small type on the back of the title-page, and in the other small print about copyright and publication data, admits that almost all these pieces first appeared in the *New Yorker* between 1971 and 1975. It would help if they were individually dated, so that one could at the very least relate these occasional writings to the occasions that produced them. The publisher's blurb and the author's preface rather suggest that the book is a considered whole, so that one is disconcerted by unexplained digs and references, by occasional repetitiveness and by the lack of cohesion between the essays. Second, there is the unmitigated parochialism. New York may be today's No 1 art parish but that does not make it the only parish in the world. Rosenberg's view of the past is satisfyingly broad; his view of the present is grievously blinkered. His tone is often that of one continuing a private argument.

Moreover, he himself must take some of the blame—if, as he certainly feels, blame is to be allotted—for art's present extremity. His identification with Abstract Expressionism was too complete. One can sympathize with his excitement (even though one might doubt the wisdom of prescribing any form of "expressionism"), but no critic has the right to limit the vision to his only one true way in art and then "up the bandwagon he has set rolling, not to cure when other critics make comparable claims for alternative modes and methods. Rosenberg did not merely acclaim his favourite art. He interpreted it broadly and at length, attributing quite specific social and psychological functions to what was a spreading movement embracing a variety of people and work. Looking back on his exposition (mostly in *The Tradition of the New* and *The Anxious Object*, but still the basis of his criticism), one can see how his assurance, how the very persuasiveness of the pattern of social dissfection and self-assertion he proposed, must have forced others into late or proud or bored to join the clubs—into counter-statements like those of Post-Painterly Abstraction and of Pop, or into parody like Jasper Johns.

In insisting on handling supposedly hard-won individual productions (many of which looked like routine, Redcoat efforts) in the most general of terms, so that actual paintings were never referred to and whole artists disappeared in the sweeping diagnosis, Rosenberg actually encouraged the kind of abstract theorizing that he now finds offensive, and also the emphasis on art as argument that has allowed idea to dominate over visual creation and thus made the desert he now describes. Pollock is not named throughout the whole of *The Tradition of the New*. Rosenberg blames Duchamp for cutting "the tie between art and the handicrafts, thus immersing art in endless talk", and he blames the apostasy from Abstract Expressionism on an unnamed "New York painter who literally conceives art as an all-black picture, which he repeats in uniform size, shape and surface".

Those last quotations are from *Discovering the Present*. It is a mark of his parochialism that Rosenberg should be satisfied to make such an in-crowd reference. The "New York painter" is undoubtedly Ad Reinhardt. Rosenberg also demonstrates his reluctance to concern himself with the visual facts of the art he admires or condemns when he calls Reinhardt's canvases "all-black" or, elsewhere, "evenly tinted", for that is precisely what they are not. He goes on to attribute to Reinhardt an attitude that is totally inappropriate: "This artist could announce, if he chose, 'I have met the machine and it is I'". Reinhardt was not denying human creativity; he was asking whether the expressionistic rhetoric was really necessary.

In many respects *Discovering the Present* is a happier and a better book than *Art on the Edge*. In it are assembled Rosenberg's otherwise uncollected pieces published in a great variety of places since 1961, plus some more or less public thoughts set down and developed since 1939. The subject-matter is as wide-ranging: art yes, but also man, woman, history, Marx, the intellectual, the Jew in culture, fascism, communism, America. To meet these Rosenberg the connoisseur-gourmet of the arts and the committed cultural historian as well as the belligerent art critic. His editor, Michael Denneny, might have been accorded a place on the title-page, not least for annotating each piece so that we know not only when it appeared but also where—this was written for *The Partisan Review*, that for *Vogue*—and can adjust our sights accordingly.

Rosenberg is now seventy. His hobby-horses now look like old nags. He still writes better than most American commentators, and on a broader culture and a deeper engagement, but his reports on the art world he rejects do not warrant international distribution between hard covers, glad as one is to hear he is still there to goad the manipulators and remind them of how it was done in better times.

The doctor's wife

By John Willett

MINA C. and H. ARTHUR KLEIN:
Käthe Kollwitz
Life in Art
183pp including 110 illustrations. New York: Schocken Books. $6.95.

Like Paula Modersohn-Becker, who was ten years her junior, Käthe Kollwitz was remarkable more for the quiet integrity of her personality than for her contribution to the pictorial revolutions of the twentieth century. Oddly enough, the two women are never compared in Mina C. and H. Arthur Klein's appreciative and sensitively felt book. And there are obvious differences: Kollwitz a graphic artist and sculptor, a doctor's wife, socialist by background and conviction, who lived in Berlin through the 1920s and the Nazi era to die at the end of the Second World War; Modersohn-Becker a painter and wife of a painter, who died in 1907 at a time when it was still possible to live in an "artists' colony" ignoring the great issues of war and peace, famine and unemployment. Both both relate to the social-humanitarian art of the late nineteenth century, ranging from Carriière's *Maternités* to Rodin's statue of Balzac; both were something of an artistic counterpart to the determined ladies of the suffragette generation; and both produced an extraordinarily haunting series of self-portraits. If they had an English counterpart it was surely Gwen John.

Even before television came along the artist's personality was expected to be "colourful", communicable in Hollywood's just-for-life terms. Augustus became the British ideal of a great artist, Gwen remained almost unknown. The authors, then, have not got a particularly easy job in trying to convey to a modern public the particular quality of Kollwitz's character, however much it permeates her art. They have chosen to do it in a fairly popular, even chatty style, avoiding scholarly apparatus (though there is an index and a short bibliography) and providing plenty of illustrations which say more than words. But clearly their book is a labour of love, and not merely of love but also of extensive knowledge and research. They tell us about her seven-year engagement, about her life as a wife and mother in a slum practice, about her early meeting with Gerhardt Hauptmann, her visit to Steinlen, her role in the Prussian Academy in the 1920s and her difficult position after the Nazis forced her to resign. They note (as did Brecht) her facial resemblance to Barlach's Flying Angel and illuminating about the relationship between the two artists.

But they leave us with two puzzles. First of all, what exactly was her political allegiance? Her brother Konrad Schmidt, who spent only saw much of Engels in London in the 1880s, later worked on the staff of the socialist *Vorwärts*, but many of her posters and "committed" graphics were done for communist causes, including the International Workers' Aid, which the authors describe, a little euphemistically, as "left-oriented". Yet at the time of Munich she could write "War has been avoided! Thank you, Chamberlain" and tell her grandchildren that Hitler was an ass. Then how are we to explain the difference between those committed graphics of the 1920s and after, with their stylized mothers and even sentimentalized children, and her more detachedly observed drawings with their infinitely greater moral force? It was perhaps a pity that she came so late to sculpture, where the intensity of the feeling had to be reconciled with far more arduous technical demands. There is nothing superficial about her bronzes, which are in fact less manoeuvred than Barlach's.

If there is a lesson here it is perhaps that a difficult achievement, "academic" or otherwise, often says more about the personality and effort behind it than any conscious effort to communicate these qualities. That is, if the personality is strong enough to come through. Is it worth bothering about it? I think so.

A soldier's life

By Brian Montgomery

ALUN CHALFONT:
Montgomery of Alamein
365pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £6.50.

As his brother I was personally involved with Montgomery of Alamein from my childhood days, seeing and listening to him constantly, in good times and bad. In spite of this I have not found it difficult to write what I hope is an objective review of Alun Chalfont's book. Great public figures can never hope to escape adverse comment and criticism, and it would be a rash man indeed who allowed personal interest to overlay this fact. I am writing with this thought in mind, because in my own book on our family I have written very frankly about my brother, who was indeed a controversial figure. What intrigues me particularly about Lord Chalfont's book are his motives for writing it. If he had concentrated chiefly on an analysis of the Field-Marshal's military life and campaigns, as so many writers have done, I doubt if it would have been interested. But the author has adopted the stance of an amateur psychoanalyst, rather than a military critic; and subjected my brother to treatment accordingly; he has drawn conclusions about Montgomery as a military commander, which I feel are certain to be rejected by those who served with him (which Lord Chalfont himself never did).

To the best of my knowledge there is nothing new in the picture the author has put together of the broad facts of Field-Marshal Montgomery's life and service, either of his early days in the army or, later on, of the great issues which so beset his career during and after the Second World War. No fresh insight is provided into what actually happened, and no new events are recorded. Briefly, the composition of the work is old material, redrawn with obvious literary merit by an accomplished writer, and garnished with many of the "Monty" stories, which will be recognized as taken from previous publications. It is the nature of the emphasis on well-known facets of the Field-Marshal's character, and on the argument and controversy which frequently surrounded his performance, that will chiefly strike Lord Chalfont's readers. More than half the pages contain either denigration of character or belittlement of performance, or both, including a degree of sarcasm and sneering or snide remarks, as well as factual errors about the Field-Marshal's family relationships. By contrast, praise and appreciation of character and performance appear on relatively few pages. This marked degree of imbalance in the text stands out very clearly, and leads naturally and easily to an analysis of the main points in the author's opinion of Montgomery as a man, and of his capacity as a military commander.

For a start, the picture of the Field-Marshal's hostility to our mother has been overdrawn and exaggerated, to the point where the author records that "his whole life, since his realisation that his mother was his enemy, had lacked an essential dimension; he had accepted and rationalised a severe case of emotional immaturity". The fact is he never regarded our mother "as his enemy", and furthermore each one of us quarrelled with her at times. After all we were a family of nine, six boys and three girls, between whom there were certainly frequent disputes with on occasion bitter struggles, that required our mother to take immediate and firm steps, accompanied when necessary by appropriate disciplinary action. But it does not follow that any of us needed psychiatric treatment, or were so withdrawn as to be unable to form close friendships with contemporaries and equals—as the author describes his subject. For instance I well recall an occasion when my brother (the eighth child) and myself were in dispute over the possession of a pet guinea-pig, and how in the event we pulled the animal in half, with each retaining one portion! Of course retribution followed swiftly, and readers of Lord Chalfont's book may see in this some parallel with his account of how "Montgomery, when he was a boy, pursued a small girl through the house with a carving knife".

Clearly Alun Chalfont does not understand what life was like in a large family in the late Victorian and Edwardian era, with children of different ages, characteristics and temperament. Inevitably, therefore, he has concluded, wrongly, that the Field-Marshal's childhood life was wholly governed and dictated his future development, both personally and professionally, and in a manner very much to his detriment. In this connection I have some of the letters that "Monty" wrote to our mother until her death in 1949, and this reinforced my astonishment when I saw the author had said of the Field-Marshal: "After the war he never wrote to any of the family."

There are other such errors which are probably only of interest to our own family, though they obscure the central fact of "Monty's" great and abiding sense of humour, which was so well known to his friends. A correspondent, in a charming tribute to him in *The Times* just after his death, expressed this point well: "I do not recognize the severe and humourless man depicted in most obituaries yesterday. For me he will always be associated with fun and laughter."

In the author's portrayal of Montgomery as a military commander all the controversial issues are discussed once more, but with a distressing reluctance, in every case, to accord credit to the commander for his actual performance, or the results he achieved, and quite contrary to the views expressed in the British official war histories. This is surprising, and indeed paradoxical, for in the space of a single page Lord Chalfont has said of his subject: "He was a very good professional soldier", though a few lines later he writes: "He was not intelligent in a wide sense, and was by normal standards an academic failure." The author continues by quoting Goronwy Rees as saying that the Field-Marshal had a mind of classical directness and lucidity, and that the difference between him and the other commanders was that he ("Monty") actually thought in the same sense that a scientist or scholar thinks. I doubt if many will agree that "Monty" was not intelligent, or that, to quote the author again, "there were weaknesses in the armoury of his military thinking". In this context two further comments by Lord Chalfont are relevant: "Montgomery was never as great a desert general as Rommel", and "Montgomery's military creed was fundamentally concerned with the organisation of an army. At the other end of the scale he had a very good grasp of minor infantry tactics". The last comment will surprise a number of people! However, against this background it is at least refreshing to note the author's candid tribute to his subject on three very important issues: his military knowledge and professionalism, his capacity as a superb trainer of men, and his ability to hold the devotion and loyalty of men and women in all walks of life, not only in the armed forces.

In his comment on the effect on Montgomery of the carnage of trench warfare during the First World War, Lord Chalfont has written:

> The sheer waste of human life in the trenches pierced deep into his consciousness and was later to condition much of his approach to command on the battlefield. His reaction was not one of compassion or humanity—it was simply a professional's contempt for the waste of the basic commodity of war—manpower. If men were to be killed, they must die in the pursuit of a carefully prepared plan. *As he was to demonstrate later in North Africa, his experiences in the First World War did not inspire him with any obsessive concern for the preservation of human life.* (The italics are mine.)

In this connection the author is vehement in his denunciation of Montgomery for not being more active in pursuit at the end of El Alamein. But the truth of the matter is that the battle had cost 13,500 casualties (averaged at 1,000 per day) and one of several important reasons for his post-battle plan was the need to avoid further casualties. Part of the "Monty magic" was that all ranks knew their lives were as safe as possible in his hands; in a citizen army of nearly two million men this was a fact of primary importance. It was he who insisted that, for the first time, every soldier should be made available in the forward battle area, at casualty clearing stations, for he knew that when a soldier is wounded, or near to death, he needs the care and attention of women. This comment speaks for itself.

"Monty's" critics have taken him to task for the unjust manner in which, they allege, he treated some of his subordinate commanders, notably General Ramsden and General Lumsden. The author is no exception in the scale of his criticism of the sacking of both Ramsden and Lumsden, but he again appears to have missed the point. In war an army commander has the lives of men in his charge, and he must therefore ensure that only the best, and most able, subordinate commanders serve under him. To obtain this assurance it is always necessary to be firm, and sometimes ruthless, in the same manner as a prime minister or the chairman of a great company may sometimes find it necessary to act.

It is true to say that at all the lower levels of command, in both 8th Army and 21 Army Group, down to junior officers, non-commissioned officers, and the soldiers in the ranks, Montgomery was universally trusted—loved is perhaps not too strong a word. This loyalty and devotion was particularly strong among all ranks at his TAC (the small tactical headquarters sited well forward, from where he could "keep a firm hand on the battle in order to ensure that the master plan was not 'mucked about' by subordinate commanders having ideas inconsistent with it").

With this in mind it is astonishing, to say the least, to read Lord Chalfont's comment on "Monty's" relationship with John Poston, one of his liaison officers at TAC. *Poston had been killed just before the German surrender and the author has written about him: "Montgomery's fondness for Poston is an interesting phenomenon. There have inevitably been suggestions of a homosexual element in the relationship.* Certainly Poston, more than any of the other liaison officers, touched a chord in Montgomery's emotions. Surely all those who marched with the great victor of El Alamein, and who followed with him to Lüneburg Heath, will stand aghast at the temerity of a man who can write in such a way about their leader and Commander-in-Chief. The author has made these deplorable innuendos without one shred of evidence. Men like Freddie de Guingand, who had known "Monty" since 1922, Johnnie Henderson (his ADC), General Sir Brian Horrocks and Field-Marshal Sir Gerald Templer, who all worked so long and closely with their commander, are appalled at the suggestions.

Finally, I come to the epilogue with the author's summing up of the Field-Marshal's place in history as: "Certainly not one of the great commanders". Readers of this book may prefer the verdict of A. J. P. Taylor: "Montgomery was the best British field commander since Wellington."

Failure and fiasco

By Bryan Ranft

JOHN WILLIAMS:
The Guns of Dakar
September 1940
281pp. Heinemann. £3.90.

Amphibious attacks, involving the landing of troops against alerted defences, have always been the most hazardous of maritime operations. In the long period of British naval ascendancy, with rare exceptions such as Quebec, failure and fiasco—terms which figure frequently in John Williams's highly competent *The Guns of Dakar*—were the rule. Between the world wars, memories of the disaster of Gallipoli, reinforced the belief that technological developments had made such operations even more dangerous. In the summer of 1939 the embryonic joint service training and development centre which had been established to design specialized craft and develop tactical doctrine was closed down on the explicit grounds that no amphibious operations were to be expected in the imminent war. One of Churchill's first acts on returning to the Admiralty was to revive it, but such was the pressure of events that the old problems came to be tackled again in the hard school of combat operations, first of all in Norway in April and on a small scale at Dakar in September 1940. Churchill's power, which was so important in overcoming early British failures, was eventually used to make possible the large-scale landing operations in the Pacific and European theatres. But to the very end of the war—success could never be guaranteed.

John Williams's clear and judicious account of the failure of the combined British and Free French attack on Dakar shows that, virtually none of the factors later found to be essential to success were present. There was no unity of command and extraordinary weakness in communications made it impossible to remedy this. There was no preliminary detailed tactical planning, and failure in the work of the naval staff in London increased the difficulty of the commanders on the spot. Above all, the expedition was based on a fundamental failure of political intelligence.

De Gaulle firmly believed that the very appearance of the invasion force, followed by an appeal from himself would bring the French naval and military forces in the port over to his side. In the skilful exposition of the policies of the Vichy government and its representatives at Dakar, which is one of the most valuable parts of his book, Mr Williams shows clearly why this belief was totally mistaken. Even if all these defects had been remedied, one other factor was against the attackers—luck. Unexpected fog and mist and the fortuitous arrival on the scene of a strong Vichy naval squadron confused the minds not only of the operational commanders but of Churchill and the War Cabinet in London.

It was of course this last event which led to the controversial dismissal of Admiral Sir Dudley North by the Admiralty. This is judiciously but not as exhaustively treated as it is in Arthur Marder's *Operation Menace* (reviewed in the TLS on February 20, 1976). The almost simultaneous appearance of two books on the Dakar operation inevitably leads to comparison. Mr Williams need not fear this. His narrative and analysis are clear and convincing. His use of French secondary sources gives a valuable additional dimension to *The Guns of Dakar* and his references to the British sources are adequate. The only major weakness in judgment comes in his concluding sentences, when he accepts the questionable evidence for the view that Pierre Boisson, the Vichy High Commissioner in Dakar, was on the verge of surrendering when the attacking forces withdrew after the failure to find support ashore had been followed by serious damage to the British naval forces. Professor Marder's scepticism on this point is probably right.

Project Cancelled, by Derek Wood (253pp. Macdonald and Jane's. £5.95), a study of the abandonment of Britain's advanced aircraft projects, chronicles the fate of successive governments, Conservative and Labour, in the first place to bring about the rationalization of the aircraft industry and then to give it a clear and encouraging lead. The story of the TSR 2 is only the best remembered of a series of politically induced setbacks going back to the Miles M52 in 1946. They are all carefully described. *Project Cancelled* is a technical book, full of diagrams and photographs and intended for the specialist. Its message, however, deserves to reach a wider readership as well.

The encroaching cold

By Rosemary Dinnage

V. R. LANG :
Poems and Plays
With a memoir by Alison Lurie
297pp. Heinemann. £4.75.

The death of a talented and high-spirited girl, familiar enough in Victorian fiction, is the last thing we are *prepared for today*; when it does occur we expect it to be the outcome of a way of life—drugs, accident, suicide—rather than of a meaningless, inexorable illness. Bunny Lang, daughter of a misanthropic musician and a Boston society heiress, was the centre of a *large, dazzled circle of friends in* and around New England in the 1950s: *writer, producer, and actress* at the Poets' Theatre of Cambridge (*Massachusetts, that is*); *débutante, university dropout,* chorus girl, poet; dressed either in grubby cast-offs or in elaborate *confections from her trunks full of* stage costumes. She had charisma; alternately bewitched and tormented all who crossed her path; and at *times* wreaked terrible revenges. When an author took too little interest in a play she was producing for him she sent all his characters *on stage in pink combinations*; and a character in New York who caused offence had 1,000 stickers saying "My name is Parker and I am a pig" distributed around his neighbourhood. She was jilted, the doomed Bunny, by an avant-garde painter, was idyllically married to *another for her last sixteen months*, and died of Hodgkins' disease at thirty-two. For the last few years of her life she had known she was to die.

Alison Lurie's portrait of her friend is as excellently and movingly written as one would expect it to be:

Sometimes she would behave as if she had never heard of doctors or their advice, up all night dancing and all day at the beach, and then anyone who sympathized with her . . . was fixed with a withering look. At other times she played the part of a desperate invalid so dramatically that any solicitous act or speech took on the air of a bunch of violets dropped on a great battlefield. In May she gave a poetry reading for the Poets' Theatre, for which she turned up looking ghastly pale and haggard, dressed in low-cut black velvet like Madame Bovary. . . . Half the audience was weeping when Bunny finished, but when the lights went up I could have sworn the dark circles under her eyes had been improved with greasepaint.

Indeed the memoir, which makes up about a quarter of the book, is so readable that we reach the end of it feeling frustrated. Was it Bunny's father who broke up the engagement? Did it break her heart? Would the marriage have turned out well? But it is not, after all, a delicious Alison Lurie novel but real life: awkward and badly plotted, as usual.

Embarrassment and irritation are common reactions to the cock-ups produced by death as novelist. Bunny Lang's friends, Alison Lurie comments drily, were "variously grieved, frightened, or embarrassed according to their various natures" by the news of her incurable illness; "I can't go around telling everybody I'm dying, can I . . . it just embarrasses them", she quotes. It is in something of the same spirit that we turn to the other part of the book, to *Poems and Plays* by V. R. Lang, slightly uneasy mourners at the funeral of someone we never knew. Here we have a surprise for which Alison Lurie's characterization has not quite prepared us: jagged, freewheeling verses, impatient; uneven, confident, hurt; none of the whimsy or histrionics we might have expected. They are often about isolation and occasionally about great despair; we wish we knew their dates and their relation to the author's knowledge of her approaching death.

The two plays are excellent. *Fire Exit* is the Orpheus myth, slightly altered. Orpheus, a kind of André Previn-style musician, stoops to marriage with orphaned Eury, convent-educated daughter of showbiz folks; his crime is *not* to look back at her—abandoning her to Hades, a provincial vaudeville show where she does a strip act, existing "not asleep. Not awake. But with my eyes open." Comic aunts, corrupt impresarios, and a chorus-waiter all slot easily into the free-verse form, and the theme of actor and audience, watcher and watched is ingeniously *played through. The play is to be revived*—or perhaps has been by now—and should be eminently actable. *I Too Have Lived in Arcadia* is shorter but more ambitious, intense and lyrical.

In the end, I think, the two halves of the book do fit together to make a whole, something more than just a memoir of interest to only a few people, tacked on to a sheaf of talented verse. Each half of the book curiously illuminates the other: before she knew she was ill, or had met the man who was to break off their engagement, Bunny Lang was writing in *Fire Exit* about a frightened girl left behind on stage by an egotistic artist, in a play permeated by images of an encroaching desolate cold. We may take the book as a modern *memento mori*:

Pity the flowers broken at the stem,
pity the cracked
And the shattered, pity me
not them,
We ache who break them, we
attend with fright
Our damages, too late we learn
them,—
Then go underground, go home
escaping them.

Burnt-out suns

By Douglas Sealy

WELDON KEES :
The Collected Poems of Weldon Kees
Edited by Donald Justice
180pp. Nebraska. £2.40.

Weldon Kees was born in 1914 and disappeared in 1955. His editor considers him "an important poet, among the three or four best of his generation". I take this to mean that as journeys end he will be dining with Berryman, Jarrell, Lowell, Roethke and Wilbur, or perhaps at another table with Duncan, Plutzik and Stafford—Donald Justice's assessment is a study in vagueness. If, on the other hand, we accept Kenneth Rexroth's panegyric, printed on the back cover, as accurate, Kees might have preferred not to dine. According to Rexroth:

He was a stranger and unafraid in the world of high-paying news weeklies, fashionable galleries, jazz concerts, highbrow movies, sophisticated reviews. . . . When he said, in those gripping poems, that it filled him with absolute horror, he meant it. On July 18, 1955, his car was found abandoned on the approach to the Golden Gate Bridge. He has never been seen since.

Kees's disappearance does not prove the genuineness of his feelings and even if it did it should not affect our opinion of the poems, which, the *editor suggests*, make their "deepest impression when read as a body of work". In practice this means reading many variations on the one theme—life is boring, very unpleasant, and there is no end to it as long as one lives. Take "The Beach in August", a poem further *from hysteria than* most, which uses his favourite image of jetsam and where each verse is a variant of the others:

The day the fat woman
In the bright blue bathing suit
Walked into the water and died,
I thought about the human
Condition. Pieces of old fruit
Came in and were left by the tide.

What I thought about the human
Condition was this: old fruit
Comes in and is left, and dries
In the sun. Another fat woman
In a dull green bathing suit
Dives into the water and dies.
The pulmonary gluten. It is noon.
We dry and die in the sun
While the seascape arranges old
fruit,
Coming in with the tide, glistening
At noon. A woman, moderately
stout,
In a nondescript bathing suit,
Swims to a pier. A tall woman
Steps towards the sea. One thinks
about the human
Condition. The tide goes in and
goes out.

The first verse implies that people are like jetsam, the second that it is only their thoughts that make them so, and the third indicates that thinking is of as little consequence as any other activity. The rearrangement of the words is neatly done, the conclusions irreproachable, I would willingly sign a certificate that the above is an authentic poem, and yet it obstinately refuses to stay in the memory. *There is not much room, what with* "fire and fleet and candlelight" and "I did not know death had undone so many" and "when I died they washed me out of the turret with a hose", but if everyone squeezes up close it is surprising how many can be fitted into even a telephone box.

Over 800 new books of poetry are listed in the current *Poetry Yearbook*. What man would be patient or industrious enough to read them all in search of one that would make his hair bristle while shaving? Would he regard Kees's slightly Gothic *mise-en-scène* as a partial reward—"the black roadsters throbbing on the highways blue with rain", "the smell of a hundred burned out suns", the grounds where "the antlers by the pool have varicose veins", the castle where "the princesses were whores", the gardens where "prurient tapirs gamboled on our lawns", and the hogs where the hand "claws at the spot where banisters have been"? A few successful grotesqueries hardly make up for the deadening feeling that Kees is imposing the poetry on his material, turning out shiny encapsulations of his weltschmerz, like those glass domes filled with snow falling on miniature villages. The snow may be the colour of blood but the effect is the same—tedium.

Time
Mows the brittle stalks of autumn as
It stirs the fresh grass, heals all
things
And shapes the blood of new
wounds. Shadows slide.

The squirrel turns in his cage, shale
Tumbles from a mountain to a road,
A planet surges, plunging, and goes
out.

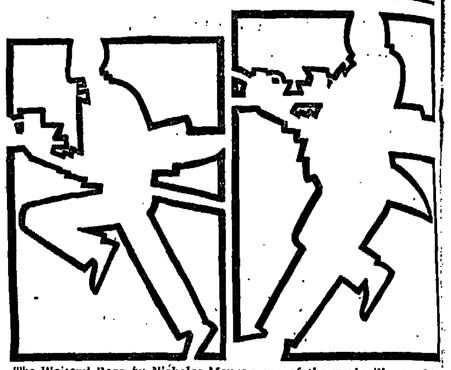
Kees has too consciously assumed the mantle of the "great poet" treating large themes in a grandiloquent way, but succeeds only in being like the actor of Lear who continues to play the part after he has left the stage. Accomplishment can be taken too far.

At Ely

John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, d 1470

Among the floating passengers below
This starry lantern, hale in effigy
Tiptoft lies by his brides, immaculate:
Serene and resurrected trinity.
Restored by art, cosmetic in his grace,
Watch him embrace the pure November chill,
Who at another time, alone, knelt down
And felt the axe descend on Tower Hill.

Anthony Thwaite



The Waiters' Race by Nicholas Monro : one of the works illustrated in the Arts Council's booklet New Work 2 *(16pp. 35p), the catalogue of the recent exhibition at the Hayward Gallery, London.*

Dastard deeds

By E. S. Turner

Sexton Blake's Early Cases
209pp. Arthur Barker. £3.75.

The reprinting of old detective stories is now a settled branch of the nostalgia traffic. Sir Hugh Greene has compiled three volumes of tales about sleuths with some claim to be classed as rivals of Sherlock Holmes. If the detective content was sometimes thin, the social attitudes were compensation. At a different level of sophistication, the publisher Howard Baker has reprinted twenty-two full-length stories about another Baker Street rival, Sexton Blake, whose adventures appeared regularly for the best part of eighty years. Mr Baker, himself the author of many Blake stories, has also published two facsimile volumes of the Northcliffe boys' paper *Union Jack*, in which early Blake stories appeared (they began in the *Marvel* in 1893).

Now, under another imprint, comes *Sexton Blake's Early Cases*, containing of three stories also *from Union Jack*, and originally costing a halfpenny or a penny each. They are undated, but belong to the period when the taxi was overtaking the hansom. This publisher has not thought it necessary to supply an introduction or to give any account of the Blake saga, *other* than a few words on the jacket. His contribution is simply to print the stories in decent type on decent paper.

The blurb invites us to thrill, tremble and gasp at the contents of the volume, but by the standards of our deplorable times the excitements are tepid. The writing is a Grub Street concoction of period clichés. Dastard deeds invite a felon's doom, blood cries out for vengeance, train passengers are hurled into eternity, the hour of retribution looms for curs; the frustrated cudgel their brains, mutter imprecations and light the fragrant weed. Brain-cudgelling gives Blake a nasty pallor and excitement does odder things: "The detective's eyes brightened instantly as he tore open the brown envelope. Then they drew nearer each other and his forehead furrowed." Early Northcliffe fiction was pitched at simple-minded people, the sort who found the silent films sophisticated. Reread now, it has the other-worldliness of Victorian Sunday school tracts. If it is to be treasured, let it be for its robust innocence.

There are Blake fans who will maintain that "our hero"—as the narrators styled him—achieved results without using firearms. Normally he did. Yet in the "The Clue of the Dead Eyes" the detective, riding on a bullock-cart in India, is beset by ruffians and shoots seven of them dead before being overpowered. The survivors propose to hurl him to the crocodiles, a fate which some may feel he has merited. It is necessary to put one's silk hat on a couple of generations and remember that Blake's victims were only Hindus and as such were licensed game for any private investigator. Had he been attacked by homebred ruffians in Wapping our hero would surely have hesitated to strew the alleys with corpses.

Connoisseurs of myth will have guessed what "the clue of the dead eyes" was. The early photographic magazines carried reports, usually from far-off places, of murdered men found with their assailant's image preserved on the staring retina. Kipling availed himself of this myth in "At the End of the Passage". Sexton Blake, some of us feel, should have known better.

Blake's finances have always been a puzzle. In days before credit cards it was reasonable that he should have carried enough money to hire a special train, as all sleuths did. But in "Witness for the Defence" the detective, faced with the need to rush home from Mexico to save an innocent life, says to his boy assistant: "If a vessel does not leave tonight then I must charter one despite the enormous expense. Make immediate inquiries, Tinker!" Fortunately the government of Mexico, where Blake has averted a revolution, puts its fastest cruiser at his disposal. On another page Blake, pursuing a suspect to Antwerp, muses: "I wonder where it is going to end. Luckily I have plenty of money with me . . . enough to carry me round the world if necessary." As the blurb said, gasp!

If we gasp in "A Clue from the Deep" it is when we read that "Sexton Blake carried in his pocket the warrant for the arrest of the fugitive earl". *So* private detectives were empowered by Scotland Yard to seize the British aristocracy? The earl flees to Chile whence he cannot be extradited, which means Blake must trick him on board a compliant British man-of-war. Now if only they had sent Blake to Rio to arrest Ronald Biggs. . . .

One sentence to treasure from this collection runs: "Sexton Blake hailed a hansom cab and drove rapidly City-wards, stopping on the way at a hosier's to purchase a clean collar, so as to enhance his personal appearance." You never found Holmes doing that.

Silver linings

MICHAEL INNES :
The Appleby File
207pp. Gollancz. £2.80.

It is difficult to believe that Sir John Appleby, even in his apprentice days pounded the mean streets of conventional crime. For him mayhem and evil are more likely to stalk the marbled halls of Palladian country houses and clues to be presented on a silver salver. Michael Innes's ingenious and occasionally bizarre plots are well suited to the short-story form, and this collection demonstrates all his highly civilized virtues: urbane wit, a delight in eccentricity, high spirits and a style whose elegance never always makes it a solace.

P. D. James

Alienation effects

By Victoria Glendinning

SEAN O'FAOLAIN :
Foreign Affairs
256pp. Constable. £2.95.

JOSEPH STOREY RIPPIER :
The Short Stories of Sean O'Faolain
162pp. Colin Smythe. £3.75.

CHRISTY BROWN :
Wild Grow the Lilies
304pp. Secker and Warburg. £3.90.

Sean O'Faolain, doyen of Irish *story-writers*, has himself made a *much-quoted* distinction between a *short story* and what he calls a "*tale*". *The short story proper is* like a kite, "a brief bright moment", limited and concentrated. The tale is a light plane, "carries a bit more cargo", allows for changes of scene and mood. His new stories are, by this definition, all tales. *Foreign Affairs* is not an arbitrary title: *all eight stories concern* people involved in relationships outside their usual emotional environment. In "The Faithless Wife" a French diplomat in Dublin is flummoxed by the virtuous immorality of an Irish *belle mariée*; in "Murder at Cobbler's Hulk" the sexual *foreigness* is one of class and age. The erotic idiom is romantic, fin-de-siècle—in the first of these two stories the diplomatic bag silk sheets; the chauffeur and his ex-employer in the second meet in "a seething kiss".

The tales ramble, as tales tend to. In the title story, the amount of background information on the Dublin Jewish career girl and her ex-British Army protégé would serve as the synopsis of a novel. One story ends with a tabulated list of events which fall outside the *scope of the immediate narrative*; this free-falling approach to construction recurs in "How to Write a Short Story", in which the narrator struggles with a friend's anecdote in an attempt to make it a *publishable story*. Here I felt that *Dr O'Faolain* was giving me the ingredients *to make my own pudding*: is he being lazy, or am I?

The strongest story is "Falling Rocks, Narrowing Road, Cul-de-sac, Stop", in which the unlikely relationship between the young librarian and the neurotic doctor is refined and defined: "They have *liberated* one another." Sex, in the shape of an uninhibited Continental lady, breaks the precarious pattern. The women in those stories are all aliens, in a certain sense. They are never, perhaps, really loved; they are like desirable fortresses that it might be both too expensive and too imprisoning to inhabit. It is the woman within her fortress—a bungalow in Bray—that is the attraction in "An Inside Outside Complex": flying through the window at twilight, bachelor Mr Bolger longs to enter. Once established *inside*, he longs *to get out*, in order to look in again:

Nor does he know why those rare lighted windows are so troubling, suggestive, inviting, rejecting, familiar, foreign, like any childhood's nonsuch, griffin, mermaid, unicorn, hippogriff, dragon, centaur, crested castle in the mountains where there grows the golden rose of the world's end.

This Joycean, thesaurian style must be applied with pannche if it is not to sound suspiciously like indecision. Here, Dr O'Faolain brings it *off*. But it might worry Joseph Storey Rippier, who in *The Short Stories of Sean O'Faolain* makes a study of this author's descriptive techniques. He analyses the imagery of eight earlier stories, and comes to the conclusion that some of it is superfluous: in Dr *O'Faolain's own critical terms, it is* sometimes "part of the attempt to carry on and expand the effect after the sense has been given". It is tough on Dr O'Faolain that the perceptiveness of his own literary criticism should give the academic critic a stick to beat him with. Mr Rippier's *main thesis is that* Sean O'Faolain began as a Romantic (he compares the vocabulary of "Midsummer Night Madness" with that of Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale") and progressed to a more subtle and personal idiom. But Mr Rippier cannot be allowed to have it all his own way. He comments on Dr O'Faolain's archaisms, such as—to give just one example—the use of the word "strand" for "shore". This is, simply, normal Irish usage.

One does want however to go on picking at Sean O'Faolain's writing; to comment, for example, on his descriptions of faces—his obsession with the teeth, with eyelids ("sable" once in this book, and "bistre" twice—once spelt "bister"). It is a measure of his power as a writer; the reader is drawn back again and again to disentangle ambiguities, trace connections—and the pickings are, to use one of his own favourite epithets, rich.

With Christy Brown we are still in Dublin, but in a different world. *Wild Grow the Lilies*, lively, fluent and derivative, will probably be every bit as successful as *Down All The Days*. Subtitled "An Anti Novel", it traces the mollockings of a Dublin journalist, first cousin in *literary terms, need one say, to* Buck Mulligan and the Ginger Man. There is a brothel in the city and a sexy German lady out in Howth (the rich Germans in Ireland, to judge from Dr O'Faolain and Mr Brown, are becoming part of the national mythology), a deadline to meet and *a running joke about Oscar Wilde* and Golden Miller which is peculiarly funny. It is a grossly entertaining novel which would be a terrible bore if it did not move so fast. Never before in my experience has so much alcohol been consumed between hard covers. Christy Brown *indulges in all the basic male fantasies* and celebrates them unselfconsciously. It's the only way.

Film set

By Ferdinand Mount

ROGER LONGRIGG :
The Babe in the Wood
192pp. Michael Joseph. £3.75.

The key is low. The sentences are short. Each sentence comments on the sentence before, diminishing it. The character starts out full of *intentions* and pretensions. By the end of the paragraph he is pliable. Each chapter is a string of balloons pricked. Roger Longrigg practises the comedy of deflation. His nonhero, Timothy Barnes, is a writer. He is smallish, plump. His skin catches the sun. It turns out that *Timothy* is a hack writer. He is taken up by Euan Crombie, a film producer who appears to be a polymath of infinite sophistication and experience. It turns out that Euan is a pseud and a shakily financed pseud. Timothy and Euan go to Africa to make a film. Africa *turns out* to be an unpleasant, dangerous, hot and wet continent.

Euan Crombie has a family which sounds as exotic as Africa sounded in London: a Scottish American children, a grande dame of a mother, a mysterious fiancée. They mostly turn out to be tiresome egomaniacs. Their ceaseless struggle for the leading part in Timothy's screenplay is the theme of this African adventure, which takes place mainly *in a grisly safari hotel encircled by* leopards, alligators, German cameras persons and a party of French tourists whose arrival at the bar is typical of Mr Longrigg's method:

They moved to the bar in a compact military formation. Their manner said that they were superior to their surroundings, but that they did not trust their surroundings to know it. The females of their species looked steadfier than the males, but the males looked pretty deadly too. They all spoke to the barman. They all spoke terribly correct English. They all wanted Scotch. Two of the men had moustaches. One of the women had a moustache, but in other ways she was chic and handsome. She was the dark one. The other women were fair. The fair women had faces made of expensive leather.

This deflationary narrative is relieved by the dialogue's excursions into exuberance: the fiancée's reminiscences of her life as manager of the Clock Hotel (a formidably genteel establishment), the film producer's esoteric boasts and Lady Crombie's Scottish *carry-on* ("Och, it's grand to be out in the backlands, as Johnny Tweedsmuir used to say"). Yet there are not really enough peaks in the novel's terrain to be flattened. The pretensions of the film project and the characters engaged upon it are not monstrous enough to seem *worth deflating with* such efficiency. Timothy's books, we are told, "were a bit satirical but they were not nasty". Same here. Mr Longrigg's mixture wants bite like peroxide needs those otherwise undesirable additives. Deliberate restraint in comedy tends to achieve its *best effects when* there are intense feelings—outrage, despair, disgust—to be restrained. The good humour which seems to come more naturally to Mr Longrigg is better *expressed in a looser-limbed manner. If The Babe in the Wood* is a romp, it is a romp in callipers. This is a pity, *because* in some of his earlier novels—*Spitchcock, The Passion-Flower Hotel*—Mr Longrigg has evolved more delicious incongruities. Even so, enough of his wit and dash have survived the cutting-room to make *Babe* a production far *beyond the compass* of most other writers of comedy.

Full house

By William Feaver

CHARLES WEBB :
The Abolitionist of Clark Gable Place
207pp. Gollancz. £3.95.

Charles Webb's characters, the most famous of whom is The Graduate, tend to be ineffectual personalities who screw themselves up to a devastating moment with which the novel ends. The Graduate grabbed himself a girl; Kenneth Ward, of *The Abolitionist of Clark Gable Place*, uses a gun. Consequence, in Mr Webb's terms, is a quick fade. As usual, the story reads like a fable. Kenneth is looking after Mrs Fellowes's house while she is away in Italy. Kenneth, a student, is shattered by his recent experiences and is anxious to fit in. So when a pesky comes round asking subscriptions for a youth recreation programme under the auspices of the First Baptist of Our Redeemer Church, South Central Los Angeles, he seizes the chance of proving his liberal race relations. The pesky, a negro, Eugene Hall, has a sullen son and a daughter, to come and share Mrs Fellowes's house with him—not for altogether benevolent reasons: more in the way of social experiments.

Naturally the proposition turns into a four-way complication. Mrs Fellowes gets back and is not very pleased at what she finds. Kenneth smooths things over and enters a mutual-benefit arrangement with her: he will be her standby and she will see him all right in her will. As for the blacks, they prove none too easy to accommodate. Ruthanne the daughter tries bedding Kenneth, without much success. Matt the brother inadvertently provides Kenneth with a gun. Race relations wither. Long before the savage end the story would have trailed away into a kind of ritual helplessness—were it not for Mr Webb's splendid nonchalant dialogue. His characters talk in the alternately anxious and reassuring terms of, say, Mia Farrow recounting her experiences in analysis to her best friend back in the Peyton Place days. The tone is quiet, jaunty, bemused. When desperation comes the tone shrills a little but then resumes its former level. Events overtake the dialogue and Mr Webb's ending *transforms* the neat fable into a crafty tragedy.

POSTAGE: INLAND 9p ABROAD 7p

Staying alive

By Jane Miller

AMOS OZ :
Unto Death
166pp. Chatto and Windus. £3.25.

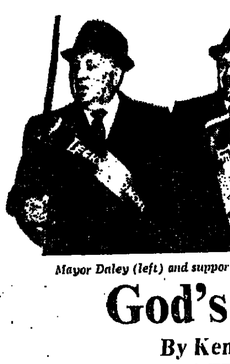
For Amos Oz, born in Jerusalem in 1939, the past forty years of Jewish history are a macabre, even ludicrous, nightmare, full of well-known images and beyond exegesis. In the two novellas that make up *Unto Death*, as in his novel *Touch the Water, Touch the Wind*, grim fun is made of the discrepancy between monstrous physical disaster and the sorts of innocent preoccupations which allowed the Jews to be taken off their guard. Decay is lovingly described, mildew and rust and *appalling human disease made* beautiful in their vigour and relentlessness, so that even the vilest forms of human cruelty are seen as natural and fascinating forces. Such destructiveness can hardly be satisfactorily anticipated by people chiefly concerned with *their own peace of mind or with* the findings of the local Goethe society. In the second novella Amos Oz speaks through a lonely old Russian in Tel Aviv who perpetually lectures to small, sleeping audiences on the menace of Soviet anti-semitism. His frustrations are *personal and ideological and they* have made him mad. His own history and the Jewish experience only become acceptable with the discovery that his pain lies in having failed to avenge himself. The peroration to his final lecture gets out of hand:

Forests upon forests ablaze with fire. Even the snow seems caught in the flames. The terror of the peasants. Village churches totter and collapse. Loved-hated cities open wide their gates. Vilna, Kovno. Bialystok. The whole of Russia is falling town after town. Fierce Jewish rage, savagely unleashed, foams up and bursts its bounds. The forland crumbles to dust piece by piece. And I, from the bottom of my soul, I whisper in the language of my forefathers: Amen, amen.

The Jews were taken off guard by more than the furies which assailed them: they were blind to a fury in themselves which they had no chance to express. If the Russians feel an unseemly compassion for their victims, as the old lecturer suggests, the Jews have now to recognize their own share in a common human savagery, something their status as victims kept from them.

The first novella has a dour French count of the eleventh century crossing Europe with his private army to crusade in Jerusalem. He hopes to find "peace of mind", *to escape, like Henry IV, the horrors* of his own place and time by venting his hatred on foreigners. The crusaders are dogged by catastrophes they provide for themselves, decimated by their self-scourgings, their search for "the hidden Jew" in the party. Jerusalem *becomes a mirage. There is no* peace for men who inflict pain on others, and to wish for such things is what staying alive must partly mean. Amos Oz is no political optimist. It is hard to imagine him viewing the dance of the flying diplomats with much *favour, and yet there is in his* ferocious evocations of suffering and disintegration and in his sense of the absurd tenacity with which individuals insist on staying alive an encouraging realism and insight.

Ronnie Murch's *Remembered Violence* (186pp. Hutchinson £3.75) is the story of Louis Grayling's last day in South Africa. Grayling, a scientist, is on the run after the security police have cracked open the sabotage organization of which he is a member. An exciting, well-constructed thriller, written at a white heat of moral indignation.



Mayor Daley (left) and supporters : from Milton Rakove's book reviewed below.

God's own cities

By Kenneth O. Morgan

The bicentennial of the American Revolution will surely launch a thousand clichés. Patriotic prose will flow in profusion; the cherished ideals of the Founding Fathers will be exhumed for the curious scrutiny of the later twentieth century. In this year of celebration, nothing is likely to prove more fertile of legend than the belief that America is a land of uniquely rural origin, a frontier Arcadia reared in the firm creed that "man made the town but that God made the country". Certainly, the ideal of the yeoman freeholder, weaned in agrarian principles of individualism, retains its magic. Children in the nation's public schools have been trained to view the revolutionaries of 1776 as so many gentlemen farmers or perhaps displaced village Hampdens, sturdy embattled champions of the libertarian spirit of the agrarian freeholder.

Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia*, with its marked hostility towards urban life, has become a fundamental text: "The mobs of great cities add just so much to the support of pure government as sores do to the strength of the human body." Originally, as propagated by such as Crèvecœur, the rural myth was an intellectual notion, designed to fan the self-esteem of educated landowners. But during the nineteenth century it acquired a powerful and pervasive appeal throughout the political nation. Radical passions, stoked up by latter-day disciples of Jefferson or Jackson, directed popular hostility towards the cities of America. State capitals were sited in obscure, upstate country towns; the apportionment of state voting districts was deliberately biased against major urban centres. The extreme pitch was reached in the Populist movement of the 1890s. Bryan's "Cross of Gold" speech in 1896 declared that America could cheerfully survive the destruction of its cities—"but destroy our farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country".

Just as radical politicians waged rhetorical war on the city, so too, Morton and Lucia White have argued, did generations of American intellectuals. Even the Progressives, [illegible] the turn of the century, who [illegible] the cities at last came to terms with the cities—in some ways served to intensify this anti-urban prejudice. Progressives were fired by the conviction that American cities, as they existed, were centres of poverty and crime, the saloon and the "machine", racial tension and political corruption. It was a view to which the muckraking journalists, notably Lincoln Steffens's accounts in *McClure's* of "the shame of the cities", gave wide currency. Frederic Howe, in many ways the archetypal urban reformer of the Progressive era, wrote passionate volumes on the city as "the hope of democracy". But it is clear that even he saw its salvation as rooted in the values of the Midwest countryside in which he, like so many Progressive reformers, was reared. Only by adopting the social cohesion, order and cleanliness of the small town of your childhood could "the city beautiful" be created, and the cities of America be equipped to transmit the national culture to future generations. Symbolically, Howe ended his days in the 1930s as himself a migrant from the city, and buried himself during the New Deal in the agricultural programmes of Jerome Frank. Similarly, Jane Addams's concept of the settlement house, as embodied at Hull House, was an attempt to revive the social and spiritual values of a virtuous, pioneering community. Even cities, allegedly unshackled from rural prejudice, viewed the city from a rural perspective, as a basically un-American institution.

And yet, the anti-urban bias of American politicians and intellectuals can surely be much overdone. After all, the urban experience was coterminous with American civilisation itself. No one who has seen the graceful piazzas of eighteenth-century Charleston (or re-read George Rogers's superb account of Southern planter society there) can doubt that American culture at the time of the Revolution was in major senses profoundly urban. As Daniel Boorstin and others have argued, the drift of American literature in the nineteenth century was very far from being unanimously anti-urban. American settlements in the west, however humble, sought to appropriate the name of "city" (usually identified in the old world with cathedral towns) and to create colleges, churches and other metropolitan institutions. In particular, the revolution in America's social and economic structure since the Civil War—a revolution of far more powerful relevance today than the distant events of 1776—turned the United States, to adopt Harold Frederic's term, into a nation of cities". By 1920 the census could report that a clear majority of the population lived in urban areas, over a third indeed in major cities. Rural Arcadia was a thing of the past—as it had been even at the time of Bryan's passionate oratory in 1896.

Since then, further huge waves of immigration, at first across the Atlantic from southern and eastern Europe, subsequently by blacks and Spanish-Americans from within America itself, have transformed the urban scene beyond all recognition. The 1960 census declared that over two thirds of the population lived in "urban" (or, increasingly, in suburban) areas, however loosely defined. This, then, is the urban reality of modern America. But, of course, the legend lingers fast behind. The dream world for so many is still enshrined in the rural writings of which Henry Ford's "Greenfield Village" in Dearborn, Michigan, provides the shrine. However, change is taking place. Over the past generation, a distinguished series of urban historians and sociologists have revolutionized scholarly understanding of America's past. They have shown how urban centres have been central to its experience from the outset, and that modern America is largely their creation. If these scholars could now conquer the popular mind (preferably without deploying the depressing jargon of the "urbanologists") that would, indeed, be another, and highly worthwhile, American revolution.

The five books under review here are particularly welcome at this time because, in their different fashions, they shed important light on aspects of the American urban experience. Jon C. Teaford's beautifully concise essay *The Municipal Revolution in America* traces the origins of municipal government in America from the early colonial period in the 1650s down to the post-Federal era of the 1820s. It shows how the conception and functions of American municipal government were transformed in these early years. American towns, like England's, were in large measure creatures of commerce. Municipal corporations in the colonies were relatively quiescent, [illegible] was growing popular pressure for a broader basis of representation based on elections, and for a more expansive municipal purpose in which American towns should direct such matters as public health, public works schemes and education. In some ways the Revolution helped on this process. On the other hand, it also led to American municipal government rapidly falling under the control of state governments. The charters of municipal corporations, previously inviolate as governed by contract, were increasingly undermined by statutes passed by hostile state legislatures. In basic respects the American Revolution marked the deathknell for municipal autonomy. This leads one to question the extent of the "municipal revolution" which Professor Teaford's otherwise impregnable argument outlines. By the mid-nineteenth century American town and city governments were largely helpless in the face of state power and of capitalistic "privatism". As James Bryce observed in the 1880s, Americans were simply not interested in their cities because—by comparison with British or German cities—theirs did so very little.

Two different examples of the urban response to wider social change in the nineteenth century are covered by Edwin Wolf in *Philadelphia* and Gunther Barth in *Instant Cities*. Mr Wolf, the librarian of the Library Company of Philadelphia, venerable institution founded by Ben Franklin in 1731, has provided a superbly illustrated volume which traces the history of the city from its origins as a Quaker settlement on the Delaware river down to the present time. It is, of course, a picture book designed to catch the 1776 market and to celebrate the great events that took place in Philadelphia 200 years ago. On the other hand, it is a highly superior one.

Quite apart from the illustrations being exceptionally well chosen and attractively laid out, Mr Wolf's intelligent and lucid commentary marks it off sharply from most of this genre. He is especially interesting on how Philadelphia, earlier than most other American cities, developed a "dual" character, with the traditional seat of government in Independence Square being [illegible] the city's commercial life. Thus, when confronted with the massive development of manufacturing industry and the accompanying waves of immigration, especially from Ireland, in the mid-nineteenth century, Philadelphia's governing institutions and civic life were able to take the strain. The added pressures of the Civil War were also safely absorbed, while even the relatively slight impact of the depression of the 1930s owed much to Philadelphia's deep-rooted sense of urban consciousness. It is well to have its essence so attractively captured as it is by Mr Wolf.

Professor Barth, by contrast, examines the spectacular growth of three new cities in the mid-nineteenth century, Denver, San Francisco in the far west, Denver beside the Rockies in Colorado. Both were the products of mid-nineteenth-century mining booms; both were crucially linked with the transport revolution, especially the railroads; both grew with astonishing speed between 1860 and the end of the century, providing in their different ways classic instances of the difficulty of primitive civic institutions coping with the urban explosion. Professor Barth's method is somewhat discursive and didactic. He starts with a long, and not wholly relevant, excursus into the growth of the European city from the Mycenaean Greeks down to the seventeenth century. He continues with a prolonged (though in many ways fascinating) discussion of other western towns in America, mission settlements, the "temple city" by the Great Salt Lake, and so on. He does not reach his appointed theme of the parallel growths of San Francisco and Denver until his text is over half-way through. Even after this, his discussion is somewhat impressionistic; the basic features are outlined rather more effectively in a crisp and concise editorial introduction by Richard C. Wade, himself the outstanding urban historian in America today.

Still, Professor Barth's book contains much to charm and to instruct. His account of the importing of the civic culture of the east and its impact upon the reluctant citizens of San Francisco and Denver is particularly fascinating. As Professor Barth puts it, the cultural life of these western cities was "at once an inspired extension and a slovenly imitation of the metropolitan centres of the eastern seaboard". This exceptionally well-written study provides graphic illustration of how the urban frontier pushed westwards in late nineteenth-century America. By 1900, in Professor Barth's view, San Francisco and Denver had graduated from instant cities to being "ordinary cities". In the light of the tumultuous social and technological changes that he describes, this is, of course, a misnomer. The book designed to celebrate the great events that took place in Philadelphia 200 years ago. On the other hand, it is a highly superior one.

Many commentators imagined that the Progressives after the turn of the century had at last enabled contemporary Americans to come to terms with their cities. In city after city, new forms of direct democracy were introduced to purge the abuses of the party machines; new power and new financial resources were given to the cities; [illegible] municipal home rule; [illegible] municipal [illegible]. A new breed of reforming mayors, Tom Johnson in Cleveland, Hazen Pingree in Detroit, Samuel "Golden Rule" Jones in Toledo, had captured the public imagination, and the press headlines. The idea of the city seemed to have become respectable at last. Give the cities the powers to run their own affairs, want the Progressive message—the kind of powers already possessed by Birmingham in Alsdorf or Basle across the Atlantic—and the basic American values would shine through and cities would be the harbingers of a new civilization. But, as with much of the Progressive programme, aspiration was not matched by achievement.

Quite apart from the fact that the First World War undermined much of the momentum of American Progressivism, leaving urban reformers like Jane Addams aspiring and unpopular, it was obvious that the piecemeal overhaul of American cities, seething with new peoples and new problems all the time, was not enough. Too many of the old abuses lingered on, undisturbed by "city managers" and other technical innovations. W. T. Stead had written in 1905, "When I first visited Chicago, I thought there was one in a thousand chances of reform succeeding here. Now I think the chances are one in two thousand." Stead's fears were confirmed only too disastrously after his death, in Chicago as elsewhere. Mayor "Big Bill" Thompson's genially presiding over the depradations and mass murder conducted by Johnny Torrio and "Scarface" Al Capone was its ultimate symbol. Worst of all, the relations of the cities with the state governments, and most crucially, with the federal government in Washington, remained ill-defined and ineffective. When the economic calamities of 1929-33 shattered the fabric of American capitalism, the cities of America were helpless. Private philanthropy, like that of Cyrus Curtis, was totally inadequate. The cities needed to build new bridges to the federal government in order to survive.

This is the theme of Mark I. Gelfand's *A Nation of Cities*, this Barth's book a volume in the Urban Life in America series edited by Richard Wade. Professor Gelfand's is a model monograph of its kind, scholarly, lucid, sound in judgment throughout. It deserves the widest readership from all concerned with the urban problem, in America or elsewhere. He traces the new relationships binding the cities to the federal authorities from the outset of the New Deal in 1933. In many ways it was ironic that it was the Democrats who should generate a new surge of urban reform. For generations they had based themselves largely on rural America, on the South above all. Until Al Smith, they had produced no urban leader of national stature; even Woodrow Wilson, although once governor of New Jersey, hailed from Virginia (and from the Presbyterian manse, to boot). But Franklin D. Roosevelt, the new president in 1933, was a cultivated landowner in the Jeffersonian mould. He knew little about Al Smith possessed an intuitive contact with the immigrant masses in the cities that the gentleman from Dutchess County conspicuously lacked. "Al knows the city people better. He can move them, I can't." Like Lloyd George, whom he much resembled, Roosevelt was at first inclined to see the salvation of the American cities in rural resettlement. If the pendulum had swung much too far in the direction of the cities", he declared. But, more as elsewhere, Roosevelt proved to be an astonishingly quick learner of unwelcome precepts.

Partly through the exigencies of financial collapse in the cities, partly through the pressure of able Democratic mayors like Frank Murphy in Detroit, Roosevelt forged new links between city and federal administration. Urged on by sympathetic figures like Harry Hopkins, himself a veteran of the settlement house movement, the government in Washington provided massive assistance to the shattered cities for the relief of unemployment, for municipal public works schemes, for the relief of municipal bodied debts, for housing projects, environmental planning and much else besides. In addition, new long-term strategies were set in motion to remedy urban blight, especially by clearing slum neighbourhoods in decaying city centres. Through partnership with real-estate companies in such organizations as NAREB, adventurous schemes for neighbourhood improvement and protection were inaugurated. The National Resources Board, under the chairmanship of Frederic Delano (an uncle of the President), launched a series of imaginative investigations of urban society, of which *Our Cities* (1937) became deservedly celebrated. In a wider sense, American cities as cultural phenomena impinged on the public consciousness for the first time. One might add a shade gently, perhaps with some of the sourer aspects of Daley's regime, mainly the blatant use of the electoral system. The well-known, perhaps apocryphal dialogue between Bobby Kennedy and Daley in 1960—"How many votes do I have in Cook County, Mayor?" "How many do you want?"—has the ring of truth. Nixon, keen Nixon out of the [illegible] that election [illegible] since 1852, is an [illegible] for entire. He seems [illegible] crude, uncultured, Irish-American spoil-man. His verbal gaffes are renowned. "I resent the insinuendos." "That isn't true enough to answer". "For the enlightenment, edification and hallucination of the alderman of Fifteith Ward". "Ladies and Gentlemen of the League of Women Voters"—even President Warren G. Harding's "Gamalielese", so mercilessly parodied by Mencken, seldom reached these heights of confusion.

Nevertheless, Professor Rakove shows very clearly that Daley is, in his way, a politician of much subtlety, complexity of outlook and constructiveness of purpose. He is also a man with his own blend of simple, populistic dignity and even honesty. He is certainly far more substantial a figure than the crude trigger-happy hammer of anti-Vietnam protesters at the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago, pilloried by "parlour pinks" throughout the land.

Furthermore, Chicago under twenty years of Daley's rule has not been ill-governed, by comparative standards. The reconstructed Loop, aid for the Art Institute, the high prestige of the symphony orchestra, are among Daley's legacies. In addition, the politics of the Democratic machine, built up carefully under largely Irish leadership on the basis of ward control in the city centre, offer a wide range of social welfare and civil rights services that enable an uniquely diverse ethnic mixture, largely unnerved by the seething "melting pot", to coexist and flourish. Further, Daley has proved adaptable enough to include emergent black American, and to a lesser extent Puerto Rican, groups within his expanding empire. Chicago may be the last of the old ethnic, machine-run cities, but it is likely to survive more or less intact well beyond Daley and his immediate heirs.

The main criticism of Daley's Chicago is not that it is "shameful" (in Lincoln Steffens's sense) but that it is disastrously conservative. It is based on the static view that the tenure of power provides its own values, justifications and rewards. New ideologies or philosophies would merely rock the boat — or "make waves" (in the words of the title, taken from an aphorism by Twenty-Ninth Ward Congressman Bernard Neistein). Daley's is the politics of equilibrium. The new kind of politics symbolized by McGovern's campaign in 1972 or the Democratic success of the white suburbs in the 1974 mid-term elections is kept at arm's length. Indeed, Chicago, as viewed by Daley, is so parochial that the Democrats may lord it for token support to their own party nominees in senatorial or gubernatorial elections. The city is all that matters. Radicals, reformers, outsiders, unpredictable figures like Sargent Shriver who might introduce unfamiliar political practices, are kept out altogether. In the recent Illinois Democratic primary, Daley characteristically threw his support behind a "favourite son", Adlai Stevenson III—who won the largest tally of state delegates. New housing development might upset local interests who dominate a ward-based party. The wider relations of the city with the outer suburbs, let alone with the state legislature of Illinois in faraway Springfield, are scant concern of Daley's.

The federal government is important mainly in terms of the delivery of a manufactured mass Democratic vote every four years. In this city, the complicated dialogue with the federal government described by Professor Gelfand is muffled indeed. Daley's Chicago, immortalized in song by Frank Sinatra, remains the archetype of the traditional type of American city, based on interest groups and mobilized ethnic minorities, existing only to perpetuate itself. The "wave-making" will not come for quite a while yet.

If all American cities followed the pattern of Daley's, then observers trying to discern hopeful urban omens for the third centennial of American history might indeed despair. But they need not do so. Chicago remains atypical, a curious parochial fossil that has somehow survived from a much earlier age. Elsewhere the cities, Detroit and Indianapolis notable among them, are on the move, making up for decades of neglect. Because of this, urban Americans can still look forward to some legitimate hope to a new birth of independence, accorded to much of the rest of the United States two hundred years earlier.

JON C. TEAFORD :
The Municipal Revolution in America
152pp. University of Chicago Press. £5.85.

EDWIN WOLF II :
Philadelphia
Portrait of an American City
Edited by Walton Rawls
351pp. Stackpole. $24.95.

GUNTHER BARTH :
Instant Cities
Urbanization and the Rise of San Francisco and Denver
310pp. Oxford University Press. £6.70.

MARK I. GELFAND :
A Nation of Cities
The Federal Government and Urban America 1933-1965
476pp. Oxford University Press. £9.25.

MILTON RAKOVE :
Don't Make No Waves . . . Don't Back No Losers
352pp. Indiana University Press. £6.

Taken to the cleaners

By Nicholas Faith

THURSTON CLARKE and JOHN J. TIGUE JR :
Dirty Money
Swiss Banks, the Mafia, Money Laundering, and White Collar Crime
216pp. Millington Limited. £3.50.

You do not need much charm, intelligence or imagination to make money from smuggled heroin or stolen shares, but you do emphatically require a friendly bank manager who does not ask too many questions. So sturdy and silent a partner is also advisable if you are bribing generals—or princes, collecting money illicitly to help a presidential candidate, or even pretending you were working for the late Howard Hughes.

Under these circumstances, as Thurston Clarke and John Tigue demonstrate exhaustively, if not particularly entertainingly or elegantly, a Swiss banker fits the bill admirably. Unfortunately they rather duck the logical conclusion of this situation: that no ordinary person or company which paid its due taxes would dream of allowing their investment policy to be guided by one of the major Swiss banks or one of the more numerous and discreet private operations ensconced in every Alpenvale.

The authors do point out that the Swiss themselves prefer to use the local savings banks and that it is not "worth the trouble" for legitimate foreign investors to operate through an expensive Swiss outfit.

However, they fail to point out that the Swiss banks are famously inept at giving investment advice—so much so that some canny stockbrokers allegedly make a healthy living by investing in the opposite direction to their Swiss clients. These eminently discreet boobies can, however, operate undetected for generations because their clients simply dare not complain, since their money does not exist in the eyes of the tax authorities at home.

Messrs Clarke and Tigue—solemn fellows both, as befits a pair of investigators formerly employed by the United States government to delve into the connections of Swiss banks and organized crime—are also unable to do full justice to the fact that these Swiss accomplices to every financial crime in the book consider themselves highly moral fellows—they were not disturbed even when Julio Munoz, a Spanish "entrepreneur" who took care of the steadily vanishing assets of the Trujillo family, hired the president of the Swiss Banking Commission as "financial adviser", as cover for his fraudulent operations. The books subtitle covers a multitude of sins, partly because "white-collar" crime is such a growth business, partly because the proceeds of even such non-U peccadilloes as dealing in drugs can so conveniently be "laundered"—rendered apparently respectable—through judicious use of a silent financial partner.

Until a few years ago, Swiss complicity in this scene, though widely known, had not been tackled in any very thorough fashion. Indeed, the origin of the famous Swiss banking secrecy law, designed originally to stop the Gestapo from gaining access to the fortunes of Jewish refugees from "Nazi Germany, provided the Swiss with a good deal of moral capital. But this has long since been squandered.

So the bankers were comparatively helpless—morally, anyway—when a comprehensive assault on them was launched a few years ago by teams of bright young lawyers from the US Attorney's Office covering the south of New York State—a jurisdiction broad enough to cover Manhattan and most of the more comfortable suburbs of New York City. These legal eagles, headed by Robert Morgenthau Jr, and including the two authors, speedily exposed the disingenuousness of the Swiss banks' position.

In theory the Swiss would co-operate only if the villain being pursued had also committed a crime under Swiss law. Hence an initial catch-22: a Swiss insistence that this condition be fulfilled often creates insurmountable problems for American officials. They must be able to prove that satisfaction of the Swiss government that a Swiss bank client has committed a crime; yet this is usually precisely the reason why these bank records are needed in the first place. To make matters worse the Swiss will refuse to release records if the criminal question is an economic one such as tax evasion, stock manipulation, smuggling, or insider trading.

And even if the investigator succeeds in acquiring the records, he needs the banker in court to testify to their ownership, and "since Swiss bankers with crucial criminal information cannot be compelled to come to the United States and produce their records, countless cases against serious criminals often have to be dropped".

The frustrations resulting from the "*fraud squad keep out*" notices so *blatantly posted at the Swiss frontier form only a small part of the book, which, indeed, suffers from the* rag-bag nature of the subject. Inevitably, it frequently resembles a series of précis of investigatory newspaper articles. This is regrettable: for if they had concentrated on the single subject the authors clearly know from first hand—the Morgenthau drive against white-collar crime and how, time after time, it came up against the ingrained secretiveness of overseas bankers—it would have been a much more satisfactory volume. And the defense that it is "not some sort of a handbook", a "how-to" volume is belied by its bad internal organization.

This sort of rich chaos is inevitable if a single tale is not being told—if a book is not dominated by a single narrative line, however convoluted, or a single character, however elusive psychologically or physically, he may be. The most satisfactory books about financial ill-doing are, inevitably, dominated by a single character—like Anthony de Angelis in the Salad Oil Swindle, or the immortal Bernie Cornfeld of Investors Overseas Services.

Unfortunately, none of the characters in *Dirty Money* are fully delineated—especially not Morgenthau, who, one suspects, could have proved a perfectly adequate hero for a volume on the subject. Too often, the protagonists of the crimes are themselves of no interest. Take the case of Phil Wilson, a legendary confidence man and "paper hanger" (described as "a criminal who specialises in hanging, or passing on stolen or counterfeit securities on brokerage houses, insurance companies, and individuals").

"Like many paper-hangers", say Tigue and Clarke, "Wilson was outwardly nondescript. He was short, stocky, plainly dressed, and had the tastes and appearance of a Middle American insurance salesman, which, before he started playing the dirty-money game, was exactly what he was". There are no gripping stories to be woven round such persons, who may well be entirely suited to their environment precisely because they do not stand out in a crowd of other financial salespeople.

The authors could defend the good, grey aura round their work, by claiming that the most bizarre story with which they were involved—the tangled yarn surrounding Clifford Irving and Howard Hughes—has been told at length by virtually everyone else connected with the affair. And, probably, there is not much mileage to be gained out of the mere names of many of the dreary—if shady—characters involved, like Patsy Lepera, Godfred Fugger (now *there's* a name to conjure with in the history of capitalism) and the Me Too Corporation of Geneva. Again, inevitably, the stories are intricate in the extreme, even to insiders; Wilson himself admitted thus "*It gets so confusing that you even get confused when you are doing it*".

But there was surely more to be made out of Alan Lefferdink, who has left a trail of misdeeds through several continents, and whose conversation with no less than Dr Norman Vincent Peale deserves immortality: Peale asked him why his "business troubles" did not dull his enthusiasm. "He said to me a priceless thing: 'A disaster is only an incident in a business career: It is something to forget, to bypass and go on.'"

Probably the most fertile and largely untapped source for a major story, however, was a young Wall Street broker, William Mellon Hitchcock, who became deeply involved in dodging United States securities laws through the hitherto highly respected Swiss private bank. As could be guessed from his middle name, Hitchcock was an heir to the Mellon fortune. During his manipulations he commuted—by helicopter, naturally—from Wall Street to an estate in Millbrook in upstate New York, where he kept in lavish style, not a bevy of mistresses, but that well-known guru of the alternative lifestyle, Dr Timothy Leary; indeed it was to Hitchcock's estate that Ken Kesey led his flock in the transcontinental coach tour so closely chronicled by Tom Wolfe in *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*.

But, for all the opportunities missed, there is a distinctly feeling that there are more yarns to come. For even as the Swiss bankers edge towards increasing cooperation with the world's fraud squads, there are many other countries prepared to take up their work. The secrecy of Liechtenstein remains inviolate, the "New Hebrides and the Cayman Islands have only recently come into vogue, and the latest word is that the boys who have picked up Phil Wilson's fallen mantle are doing a careful study of the incorporation, secrecy and tax

Panes and pleasures

By Frank Muir

NORMAN HACKFORTH:
Solo for Horne
The biography of Kenneth Horne
182pp. Angus and Robertson. £3.80.

I first met Kenneth Horne thirty years ago. I, still stiffly cased in my landing-aircraftman's best blue, was attending the first rehearsal of a programme I had written for the wireless, a situation comedy entitled *Heigh-Ho, As Off To Work We Go*, starring Peter Waring, Charmian Innes and Kenneth Horne (when the six programmes were over Kenneth Horne returned to a new series of *Much-Binding-in-the-Marsh*, Charmian Innes got married and Peter Waring, an unfortunate, hanged himself in his *prison cell*). *The last time I saw Kenneth was in February 1969 at the Writers' Guild Awards Dinner at the Dorchester, where suddenly, on-stage and mid-quip, he died.* There have been other popular performers who retained one foot in another calling—Monty Woolley and Robert Benchley spring to mind—but perhaps none gave such consistent pleasure over so long a period as did Kenneth Horne, whose career more or less began and ended with what is sometimes called the golden era of radio.

The Hornes were well-off, and *Kenneth had a happy childhood*. His father was a mesmerizing Congregationalist preacher and his mother had some gently aristocratic connections; her father was Lord Cozens-Hardy and her brother-in-law was Austin Pilkington, father of the present Lord Pilkington (of the Report and glass). Kenneth grew up a sturdy lad, very good at writing comic verse and family pantomimes but addicted to sport and general larking about. After school he had a miserable spell at the London School of Economics until he was rescued by Uncle Austin and *inserted into* Magdalene College, Cambridge. There he [illegible] his college [illegible] of Lord Rutleigh and won a half-blue for playing in the university tennis team, all of which left him time to attend a total of only seven lectures. He was sent down.

Uncle Austin, feeling that Kenneth perhaps lacked the dedication looked for in a future director of Pilkington Glass, decided not to offer him a job but managed to wangle the lad a position as salesman with a small, *new firm* called the Triplex Safety Glass Co. The lad flung himself into his work, organized the firm's sporting fixtures, did running commentaries for the firm's sports days, learned the saxophone and married Lady Mary, the youngest daughter of the Duke of Newcastle. After a year, and to the great satisfaction of the duke, the marriage was annulled. Kenneth earned a place in the King's Norton rugger team and became squash champion of Worcestershire.

Kenneth Horne's career as a *broadcaster began towards the end* of the war. He was at the Air Ministry as a wing-commander in something called the War Organization, a sinister title given to a small section concerned with regulating the supply of planes to Russia. As fellow-officer he had Squadron-Leader Richard Murdoch, an experienced professional actor and light comedian. They had a similar facility with words, playful sense of humour, and delight in fooling things up in a gentle, agreeable way. The result of this happy combination of professional and exuberant amateur was the birth of the radio programme *Much-Binding-in-the-Marsh*, which ran for years and became one of the most popular programmes on the air. Horne and Murdoch brought to comedy a lightness and deftness of touch, an air of insouciance, which was quite new and has not been equalled since.

During all these years Kenneth Horne kept his two lives apart. During office hours he was the sales director of Triplex; At lunch-time he would meet Richard Murdoch in the writing-room of the Royal Automobile Club and they would scribble away at the next week's script (I once saw them there. They came into the room quietly so as not to disturb the reading and dozing members; Suddenly Kenneth bounded towards the periodicals table humming: "Bags I the Port of London Authority Quarterly Report".) At weekends they would go off by train to some professional engagement, playing their word games on route. (One of these was to think of a word the second part of which could be a family name and the first a Christian name. One would then announce: "Mr and Mrs Ato, and their small son Tom". On one journey Kenneth was convulsed with laughter. He had, he said, thought of the perfect example so the game was finished for ever. The example was "Mr and Mrs Titty-Belt, and their small son Chas".)

In 1958 he suffered a severe coronary thrombosis and was told to confine himself to one profession in future. This was probably something of a relief. He had left Triplex *to become managing director of the British Industries Fair and from there he had gone to the board of Chad Valley Toys*, but neither of these proved to be much fun. He opted for broadcasting, to the delight of the BBC and its listeners. In shows like *Top of the Form* and *Twenty Questions* he became the near-perfect quiz-game chairman. But the show for which younger listeners will probably remember him is *Round the Horne*, which was written by Barry Took and Marty Feldman. This series has its place in the annals of radio comedy because it marks the moment when BBC radio chiefs decided that the heat was off radio and television, and they could bow to the permissiveness of society and give the writers "carte bleue". The result was a hilarious show in which Kenneth Horne, its soft centre, was surrounded by very funny comic characters whose dialogue ranged from bucolic innuendo to inspired single-entendre.

Norman Hackforth's biography can be summed up as "Quiet Days in Cliché". It is a gentle, affectionate account, studded with exclamation marks. There is an interesting though not entirely successful attempt to deploy information in the manner of *This is Your Life*: [illegible] from Kenneth Horne's [illegible] Company [illegible] and lacking only the prefactory "Well, Ramona . . ." launch into their biographical anecdotes. One would have liked to know more about this jolly, likable man than the fact that he was jolly and likable. He married three times and they were all unhappy marriages. Was he really so affable *all* the time? Perhaps it does not matter. What is important is that during the war and the post-war years Kenneth Horne, with his beefy, genial voice, radiated confidence and inspired confidence; he was that most reassuring figure, the "decent officer", the "kindly boss". His natural gifts gave enormous pleasure to listeners at a time when radio was their main source of entertainment and solace.

The odd couple

By Richard Mayne

BARRY TOOK and MARTY FELDMAN:
The Bona Book of Julian and Sandy
94pp. Robson Books. Paperback, 70p.

Round the Horne, you may remember, was a radio show that opened in 1964, and three years later won the Writers' Guild of Great Britain Award for the best comedy script. Its central figure was the late Kenneth Horne, who had first impinged on most listeners as Richard Murdoch's partner in the earlier series *Much-Binding-in-the-Marsh*. Murdoch, still going strong in *The Man from the Ministry*, had himself been straight man to Arthur Askey in the pre-war (and wartime) *Band Waggon*. So, if you're still with me, *Round the Horne* was in the strange *position of having as its* star the straight man to a former straight man. It was rather like that curious process whereby the political giants of yesteryear are replaced by their former henchmen, who then become giants in their turn.

Kenneth Horne did, of course, become a giant. His deep, serious, jolly voice was that of the businessman he had once been—a senior executive taken unawares in bizarre surroundings, knowing that he cuts an undignified figure, but keeping up appearances with naive gusto: cheerfulness is good for staff morale. He could have developed into a John Tilley, boss of some fraudulent business reading out disastrous company reports, a comic Kreuger or fringe banker with nothing to lose but his accent. He did not—largely, I think, because he sounded so transparently honest, a nice, comforting voice that made you feel good inside because he shared the joke against himself. So he was a host rather than a comedian; and the fun of his shows depended not just on his own rich talent but on the wit of the script and the skill of his partners in the cast.

Horne's reassuring personality was brilliantly exploited by Barry Took and Marty Feldman to give to humour "in bad taste" a kind of By Appointment respectability. Nowadays it would hardly matter what Dame Edna Everage gets away with would have caused uproar a decade ago. But in 1964 Kenneth Horne was indispensable: he gave innuendo a good name.

Of course, it was all in the mind. The actual words of the *Round the Horne* scripts were suggestive, but *little more: many of them*, like their parodies of rustic folk songs were strictly nonsensical. 'But that was where Horne's partners came in—the deft Hugh Paddick, and the protean Kenneth Williams, sung camp, cockney, and mangelworzel, in a kaleidoscope of vocal pirouettes.

"Julian" and "Sandy" were stock figures in the cast—eternally bitchy interior decorators, a camp couple of dandies in aspic, frozen in postures of the Imperwisted 1920s. It was the first time, so far as I know, that homosexuality has become the subject of radio comedy; Hugh Paddick as Julian and Kenneth Williams as his friend Sandy were soon as popular as widely quoted as the earlier, more innocent grotesques of *Ilma de Poze*, *Take it from Here*. The listening public was made free of a category of jokes that had been all the rage in more restricted circles for many years.

Republished now with continuity written in and bravura drawings by Arthur Horner, the "Julian and Sandy" scripts need sympathetic reading. You need to hear the remembered voices: you need also to re-create the mental climate of the time. For although many of the jokes were at the expense of pretentiousness, and some were simply puns, the main burden of the humour was Oo-aren't-they-awful or What-a-pair-of-raving-poofs. Complete with almost-heterosexual language ("vada" for "see", "polare" (etc) for "talk", "omi" for "man", etc), Julian and Sandy could have stepped from any 1960s or 1950s little revue—the kind that featured the late *Max Adrian in a leopard skin singing "I'm not cut out to be a cave man"*. They belonged to a period long before unisex, long-haired men, and Women's or Gay Lib—a period, too, when in some circles it was still smart to pretend to be homosexual, rather as some adolescents used to pretend to be drunk. Straight customers felt little compunction about laughing at outrageous queens, just as Victorian readers of *Punch* laughed at servants and negroes.

" Now, of course, we *pity* domestic drudges and respect blacks. What most people feel about homosexuals remains obscure: I suspect it's a mixture of the two. But at least we feel uneasy about making fun of them—somehow, jokes seem irrelevant. Except as a memento, as does this book.

Facts from the footage

By Kevin Brownlow

PAUL SMITH (Editor):
The Historian and Film
208pp. Cambridge University Press. £4.95.

When I first heard of this book, my reaction was one of excitement. I anticipated an important step towards a well-organized film history, an object lesson in Freudian research, the result of months of viewing in obscure archives. I should have known *better*. Where film is concerned, the record of academics is scarcely impressive. *The Historian and Film* turns out to be as exciting as an examination paper. Nevertheless, it must be counted a mark of progress: just before we reach the centenary of the moving picture, the academic establishment has at last acknowledged the value of film as historical evidence.

Meanwhile, an enormous amount of this historical evidence has been lost, and continues to be lost. MGM (England) have incinerated their old films at Rickmansworth, terrified lest they should fall into unauthorized hands. The nitrate stock on which films were printed before 1948 is self-destructive anyway, as anybody who has tried to preserve a decomposing nitrate film will testify. Collectors, institutions, even governments, are now desperately trying to rescue what they can before it is too late. Many films will inevitably commit suicide by decomposing chemically, or by blowing *themselves and their bunker sky-high*. The world's archives are wretchedly underfunded, and none of them can cope with this awe-inspiring problem. Had there been but one academic institution willing to rescue films of fact, and make them available, if only to educational circles, we would have been very grateful.

Not only has the footage been lost; the information about it has evaporated. When Rossen Milanov made a study of the frontline cameramen in the First World War, he searched for the interviews already conducted. He could find nothing. Historians had allowed the entire group of official kinematographers and newsreel men to die without giving posterity the benefit of their informed questioning and expert analysis. Are they going to let the same thing happen with the cameramen of the Second World War? Or will some less qualified researcher have to do the job for them—and miss, through lack of training, some vital area?

Intended as a handbook for historians planning to work with film, this book serves mainly to warn them against accepting film at face value. It acts as a kind of map to the minefields of motion pictures, with notes warning, say, that film "a very partial or selective view", that it can be faked, and, tut-tut, *that it can provide "a tendentious picture"*. But it seems typical of the energy-sapping attrition of so many academics that their first collective venture into this vital area should be so awash with anxiety, so overloaded with the *disadvantages* of using film. Caution is an essential ingredient of good research, but this same caution, on the part of those responsible for film appreciation, has lost us much important footage, much vital information. What is desperately needed now is determination and hard work—before it is too late.

One contributor to *The Historian and Film* declares that, in general, "it is probably true that relatively little film of the presound era is likely to prove of great interest". It is a preposterous statement: the silent era is incredibly rich in factual footage, if only people would look at it. Feature-length documentaries were in production years before *Nanook of the North* (invariably claimed as the first). And fiction films were often crammed with backgrounds of extraordinary interest. This book admits it, with a quotation from Reyner Banham, who points to the American silent comedies shot on location in Los Angeles, as "an archive of urban scenery around 1914/27 such as no other city in the world possesses". *Buster Keaton's* 1926 western now in the Library of Congress, is another example. It has no aesthetic value as drama, but it was shot in a little Oklahoma frontier town, featuring the townspeople in their everyday costume. It was directed by a sheriff and prominent among the cast was a recently paroled outlaw. It thus provides unique documentary footage of the old West before its final extinction.

The book is not always so crass. But this statement emphasizes the importance of research. It also highlights the argument of Rolf Schuursma, elsewhere in the book, that schoolchildren should be taught not only to read and write, they should be taught to *observe*. Adults, too, spend hours before the television set, but they depend chiefly on dialogue, music and sound effects to hold their attention. Their visual sense has often atrophied. Silent films demand concentration, as well as a highly developed sense of observation. This is one reason they seldom appear on television.

The book has something on the credit side. It contains concise and helpful pieces by Lisa Pontecorvo and Clive Coultass on film *archives, how they work and how* to work with them. Jerome Kuehn, a producer with Thames Television, involved with the magnificent *The World at War* series, provides a fascinating chapter on the criticism by academics of popular television history.

A star from the Hölderlinstrasse

By Gabriele Annan

LILLI PALMER:
Change Lobsters and Dance
An Autobiography
310pp. W. H. Allen. £5.

Most show-business autobiographies are much the same, and *Change Lobsters and Dance* has its share of excellent anecdotes about Bernard Shaw, Ronald Colman, Gary Cooper, Hedda Hopper, Louella Parsons, Noël Coward, and others. So one can read it for those. But the book is not just about another star being born: it is also about being a refugee and about marriage across the culture gap.

Lilli Palmer was born some time around the beginning of the First World War in Poznan (then Posen), and named after one of Goethe's earliest loves. Her parents were Jews, but emphatically German Jews, not Polish Jews. Posen was not even their native town. Lilli's father, a doctor, had a hospital appointment there. When he returned from the war with an Iron Cross he found that Posen had become part of Poland. It was unthinkable to remain; the family moved to Berlin, where Lilli grew up "a bouncing German child, true to the spirit of my father, one of many thousands of German Jews who loved their fatherland above all else".

Her parents were agnostic. Twice a year, on the chief Jewish holy days, her father "made concessions" and took the children to dine with his parents where they listened, bored and bewildered, to the Hebrew chanting. At home, music took the place of religion. Lilli's father played the cello in the doctors' orchestra and held chamber music evenings at home. The girls had piano lessons and practised every day. They had to accompany their father—an ordeal for Lilli, who was not very good. "Every Sunday morning he took us to the eleven o'clock concert of the Berlin Philharmonic, the way other people go to church." There must have been legions of German middle-class households like this, where music and discipline were interwoven and where to be a philistine was as unthinkable as to be a bohemian. An ascetic element of high thinking and low living came into it: "A cook, a Fräulein, and a housemaid were necessities; a car would have been a luxury"; and although five courses were served at dinner parties, "to eat in a restaurant was considered frivolous". It was taken for granted that every decent human being (Miss Palmer calls one chapter "A Decent Family") was aspiring—not the same thing as being ambitious. It meant improving yourself and developing your gifts for their own sake, not for the sake of worldly success.

It was completely in line with this ethos that when Lilli wanted to leave school at sixteen to study acting, her father refused to allow her to cut short her general education, but enrolled her in the most serious and prestigious acting course in Berlin. She went to school in the morning (most German schools crammed their teaching into a five or six-hour morning and set piles of homework for the rest of the day) and to acting classes in the afternoon. How she managed was her own business, though occasionally during this seven-year endurance test her father would enquire "Well, mein Fräulein, how's it going?"

It went splendidly. She passed her final school examinations and in the same month graduated from the drama course with a contract for the Darmstadt State Theatre. But then the Nazis came to power. Jews were no longer able to appear on the German stage. Anxiously the parents sent Lilli and her sister off to Paris to try and establish a new life there. The usual refugee existence awaited them: queuing for residence permits, queuing for labour permits, queuing for jobs that would get them labour permits.

But there was also a comical-sentimental *Sous les toits de Paris* side to this period: although singing was not really their thing, the two little Prussians rehearsed a Viennese sisters' act with waltz tunes, and sold themselves as a series of nightclubs on a declining scale of grandeur (they were not sophisticated enough to survive in the smarter joints), until they ended up in one with a brothel upstairs. During this period their father died. Returning from the funeral in Berlin they vowed to take it in turn to write to their mother every day and, by special delivery on Fridays so that she should get a letter even on Sundays. They certainly had hearts of gold even though they indignantly rejected offers to work upstairs in the nightclub.

An introduction to Alexander Korda encouraged Lilli to try her luck in London, and the permit rigmarole began all over again. But eventually she established herself and was able to send for the rest of the family. She appeared in a number of second-rate films and plays, approaching her feebly written parts with Germanic care and thoughtfulness and the support of a dedicated Central European coach. Even when the plays were panned her performances were praised. Alpha for effort.

In the winter of 1939 she met Rex Harrison. They exchanged life stories over a powdered-egg omelette. "But if it was so difficult for you in Paris, why didn't you go back to Berlin?", he said. She "stared at him in amazement", but married him without having tried to explain. It might have been Othello and Desdemona in reverse, with *him* loving *her* for the dangers she had passed, except that he was not really interested. In life, as on the stage, he was debonair and unmoving. Hobbies: golf, yachting, fishing. The only thing that turned him on was acting, and there he had much help to offer his wife, especially in the playing of comedy. "Comedy had never been my strong suit" she says. "Laughter is a matter of nationality. English humour is especially tricky." Right. And *while he was teaching it to her* (for a Van Druten play in New York in 1951), she was doing a television chat show in which she told her viewers about Duse, Bernhardt, Sibelius, Shaw, and Plato. She was a true child of the Hölderlinstrasse, and her father, with his cello and his Iron Cross, would have been proud of her.

It was not surprising that she had not cared for Hollywood where the Harrisons had spent most of the preceding six years. What she hated most were the endless drunken parties with sexual exchanges going on behind the respectable façade required by the Hayes Office. She had a sharp eye for cultural hypocrisy too:

Most Hollywood houses were built on a similar plan, with similar furniture and similar paintings on the walls. According to the owner's cultural aspirations, there were a number of French oils—impressionist, expressionist, or abstract. At the lowest level you could count on a Utrillo (Paris-card period), maybe a Dufy (Riviera scene), or a Renoir (small nude). More ambitious types went as far as Rousault or Modigliani, and occasionally one can across a *high-prestige Picasso. In the den* there was invariably an American primitive. . . .

The Harrisons' Hollywood period ended with their being hounded out when a scandal broke out over the suicide of a starlet with whom Rex was having an affair. Lilli behaved with impeccable generosity and loyalty. She even went to the funeral. She consulted a friend: "What does the well-dressed woman wear to the funeral of her husband's *mistress? Black?*" "*That might be going a bit far. Have you anything in navy?*" The marriage did not *break up until much later, when* Lilli felt it was Rex's duty to marry his current mistress, Kay Kendall, who was dying of leukaemia but did not know it.

By this time the culture gap had grown unbearably wide and Lilli had found someone more of her own kind: an Argentinian film star who despised films and made them only because he needed the money. His true vocation was writing, and he had left Argentina for political reasons; another refugee, high-minded and *scribidel*. Miss Palmer married him and is happily married to him still.

Meanwhile, in 1954, she had faced her feelings about Germany. She was invited to make a film in Munich. Her brother-in-law, Lord Kilmuir, who had prosecuted at the Nuremberg trial, advised her to accept. "Bridges have to be built", he said. When she got to Munich she found herself obsessed by the past, working out the age of everyone she met: could they have been in the war? the Hitlerjugend? the SS? Meanwhile everything stirred up memories of a happy childhood: the smell of the woods, the sound of children's voices, the taste of apple-cake and boiled beef. The people she met were friendly and—more important perhaps—congenial.

But although her German was fluent, she found—*quite apart from* not knowing the technical terms of filming—that "my German vocabulary, my own personal one, had vanished long ago". Did she feel that with her vocabulary she had lost that part of her personality to which it had belonged? The poems of it is that there is something slightly antiquated about her English too, full of Second World War expressions like "feeling no pain" and "going AWOL". Perhaps the effort of learning to live in a new language as an adult is so great that once the language is learnt, it congeals. Miss Palmer's style is bland, and although her book is very readable, the prevailing tone of resolute cheerfulness is frustrating; you feel that under the anodyne surface there is a perceptive and analytical woman who could say much more if she had not been so assiduous at her English lessons about having a sense of humour and keeping a stiff upper lip.

Russell Braddon's memoir-by-interview, *Nancy Wake*, first published in 1956, has been reissued (287pp and 32pp illustrations. White Lion. £3.95). Its subject, a New Zealander married to a Marseilles millionaire, was a leading figure in a second-world-war Resistance organization which numbered 7,000 by the time it linked up with the liberating allied forces in 1944.

New woman, old Eve

By Sylvia Secker

ANNE TIBBLE:
One Woman's Story
An Autobiography
157pp. Peter Owen. £3.95.

Anne Tibble continues in *One Woman's Story* her autobiography begun in *Greenhorn* three years ago. It charts her inner life and her outward experiences: these include a northern red-brick university in the 1920s; teaching, when qualified, in various schools in the north which ranged from one for The Daughters of Gentlemen Only to one where most of her pupils had crutches or leg-irons, *and one or two were in* spinal beds; marriage to the young man met first in university, also a teacher; the birth of her two children and finally the death of her husband.

But it is from her deeply felt inner life that there emerges a picture of one who has always striven towards intellectual honesty even when that honesty has run counter to her instincts as a woman. This is particularly evident in her account of her husband's love affair in middle age, the pain of which is *astonishingly conveyed—Wells's New* Woman attempting to come to terms with the old Eve in circumstances which were certainly testing enough. The husband, expected her to manage a ménage à trois.

Division was resolved after ten months by the return of the other woman to America; I quoted Yeats, "Perhaps nothing can be sole or whole that has not been rent"—a complacency with which Mrs Tibble is apparently able to agree. This running battle between instinct and educated intelligence pervades the whole book. She can be distressingly saccharine about her children while at the same time holding decidedly progressive views regarding their sexual and religious upbringing. Neither child was christened or taken to church, and it is indicative of a child's dislike of nonconformity that her daughter on going to school should want to know why, because: "I'd like to dress up and go to church. We ought to have learned collects like other children."

Mrs Tibble is a countrywoman at *heart and a schoolgirl ambition* was realized when she and her husband were living in Northamptonshire, John Clare's country; in 1932, after five years, with holidays spent sitting taking notes on the stairs of Peterborough museum, their joint work, *John Clare: a Life*, was published—a book, she says, that "without Edmund Blunden's help might never have reached print". Blunden was to remain a life-long friend, and in fact the connection was to grow closer with the marriage of her daughter to the poet's nephew.

Mrs Tibble's intellectual honesty persists to the end, facing *uncompromisingly* even the death of her dearly loved J. She cannot believe in an afterlife, accepting only that "J's body, his mind and thought are part of vital, perhaps eternal, restless, infinitely mutable, earth".

Mutations of a master

By F. W. J. Hemmings

DAVID BELLOS :
Balzac Criticism in France 1850-1900
The Making of a Reputation
278pp. Clarendon Press : Oxford University Press. £5.

Le Grand Chemin de la Postérité, a cartoon of the 1840s, reproduced in V. S. Pritchett's *Balzac* (1973).

A newspaper cartoon of the 1840s shows Victor Hugo mounted on a hippogriff and holding aloft a banner inscribed "*Le Laid c'est le Vrai*". *Four disciples, headed by Gautier, sit behind him on the monster's tail, while Lamartine floats above, reclining on a cloud. In the rear are gathered a motley crew, including Eugène Sue, who began his career as a sort of French Captain Marryat and is thus appropriately shown shinning up a ship's mast; Alexandre Dumas, striding from mountain-top to mountain-top with a millstone on his back; Frédéric Soulié, the author of the Mémoires du diable, hobnobbing with his demon; and, almost lost in the crowd, a fat little Balzac waddling along with his celebrated turquoise cane clutched in his hand. The cartoon is headed "Grand Chemin de la Postérité" and illustrates, in the most literal sense of* the word, a point made by David Bellos very early on: that Balzac, *even at his death, enjoyed no more illustrous a reputation than that of "a notorious novelist of the second rank".*

It very often happens that items of graphic art will convey more directly and more convincingly the general outlook of a period than any amount of quotation from contemporary reportage; and it is perhaps regrettable that recourse has not been had in this book to the occasional specimen of the caricaturist's work. A drawing showing "*le plus fécond de nos romanciers*" being chaired and crowned by a group of Louis-Philippard matrons might have suggested to Bellos a more extended treatment of one aspect of Balzac's work which clearly impressed his contemporaries, though it may not have figured largely in critical essays: that is, the slightly unsavoury reputation the novelist had acquired of being an expert on the heartaches and hidden frustrations of the mature married woman. Similarly, a reproduction of the later cartoon by André Gill showing the author of *Les Rougon-Macquart* solemnly saluting a bust of Balzac, who *returns his greeting* ironically, would have provided an important extra dimension to the principal theme of Dr Bellos's chapter, "The Impact of Emile Zola".

The point is that the process by which Balzac achieved the solid reputation he enjoyed at the end of the century cannot be accounted for solely by referring to the efforts of his critics. On the whole they seem to have spent their time, during these fifty years, monotonously debating the same threadbare questions: did Balzac copy reality, or did he create his own peculiar universe? Was he a throne-and-*autel reactionary, an the avant-propos* to the *Comédie humaine* gives us to understand, or was he, as Hugo argued, and after him Jules Vallès and Zola, one of the "forte race des écrivains révolutionnaires"? The latter question, modified by the twentieth-century context, still polarizes Balzacian criticism, with Béguin and Bardèche in one camp and Wurmser and Barbéris in the other.

In *Balzac Criticism in France 1850-1900* Dr Bellos distinguishes rightly between Balzac the object of critical controversy, and Balzac the storyteller whose books were bought, or borrowed from the *cabinets de lecture*, and read for pleasure. The fluctuations in his critical fortunes can be relatively easily traced in the rise and fall of the number of articles devoted to him year by year. To quantify his popularity in the truer sense, that is, to try to estimate the number of readers he actually had throughout this period, is a much more uncertain undertaking. Counting the reprints listed annually in the *Journal de la librairie* is misleading since we have no way of knowing the size of each edition.

The much more accurate method devised by Dr Bellos depends on the fact that the licensing laws under which printers operated down to 1881 obliged them to deposit with the authorities a statement of the print orders they received from publishers. These declarations were filed in the Ministry of the Interior and are preserved to this day in the Archives nationales. To extract from these half-million ledger entries the information they can yield is a slow and tedious business, but from the sampling he has done of certain key years Dr Bellos has discovered that publishers were seldom prepared to risk reprinting Balzac's novels in runs of more than a thousand copies. This was modest indeed, compared not just with the figures quoted for best-selling authors like Sue, Dumas *père* and Paul Féval, but even for a supposedly neglected master like Stendhal: *Le Rouge et le Noir* was reprinted in 1855 in an edition of 6,600 while in the same year a reprint of *Eugénie Grandet* was limited to a cautious 500. The myth of Balzac's popularity, which had a detectable influence on the degree of critical attention he was accorded, was no less potent than the equally prevalent myth of Stendhal's unpopularity, which Beyle himself fostered so sedulously during his lifetime.

First person singular

By V. G. Mylne

RENE DEMORIS :
Le Roman à la première personne, 1670-1921. Paris : Librairie Armand Colin. 240 F.

First-person narrative is a subject which has recently attracted the attention of a number of critics, both French and English. In his bibliography René Démoris cites a dozen books and articles which were published between 1964 and 1971 ; others have appeared since he concluded his study. For the most part, such critics have concentrated on the stylistic resources of this narrative mode and on the uses which certain authors have made of it. M Démoris does not neglect these aspects, but is more concerned in *Le Roman à la première personne* to trace the various trends which converged and culminated in the emergence of autobiographical form as the chief type of fiction in France in the first half of the eighteenth century : "Le triomphe du récit en *Je*."

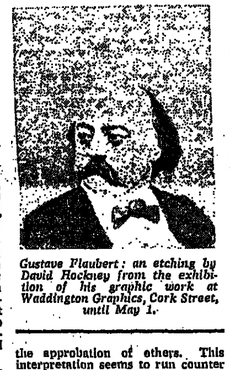
To this end he discusses a wide range of fictional and authentic memoirs. Since a fair number of these works are little known, and no one else is likely to have the time or inclination to study them all, his readers are faced with the question as to how far they can rely on his interpretations of unfamiliar texts. Two factors make me, at least, willing to accept his word : from his general comments and style of argument it is clear that he is an intelligent man who does not try to alleviate or suppress complexities ; and, when he does write about better-known works, his conclusions are always firmly based on a close reading of the text.

In the first two sections of his book, covering the period 1600-1680, M Démoris pursues various kinds of first-person narratives—picaresque, utopian, novels and autobiographies of self-justification, etc—and suggests how these were related to current assumptions about society, the writer, history and fiction. One group of ideas takes pride of place in these analyses : the importance of social class, and society's view of writing and of the man who writes. In some of the passages dealing with these factors, the arguments seem to be rather strained. In the seventeenth century, we are told, the "natural" style of the spoken word was associated with the aristocrat (whose "word" was his bond) and therefore with a *superior kind of expression* ; writing, on the other hand, was held to be a cultural attribute of the bourgeois, the man of business records and of formal contracts on paper. There is doubtless some element of truth in this picture, but even if one limits its bearing to works of prose narrative, the overneat contrast is occasionally pushed too far.

M Démoris sees a significant change in attitudes towards writers during the half-century after 1680. In this period pseudo-memoirs give way to overtly fictional memoirs, and instead of the heroes being nobles, we can observe "l'accession progressive de l'écrivant à la dignité de la représentation romanesque". Here we are dealing with works which are likely to be more *familiar to the modern reader*, including *Les Illustres Françoises* and *Gil Blas*. The former is envisaged as a *roman concertant* in which Challe orchestrates the voices of the various narrators to produce a unified coherent structure. This discussion is well worked out and illuminating. (Incidentally, it is regrettable that *Les Illustres Françoises* is available only in the excellent but very expensive edition by Frédéric Deloffre ; one of cheaper editions (which the work might well be enjoyed by the wider public which it deserves.) The treatment of *Gil Blas* is to my mind less satisfactory. The book is discussed in Sartrean terms of authenticity and *mauvaise foi*, with the hero exemplifying a bourgeois desire to win the approbation of others. This interpretation seems to run counter to the effects which the novel produces when one is actually reading it, and neglects the fact that for much of the time the narrative is funny.

The final section takes us into the "golden age" of first-person novels, with chapters on Prévost and Marivaux, and an epilogue. The chapter on Marivaux is particularly good ; M Démoris is clearly at his best when challenged and stimulated by subtle complex works.

Le Roman à la première personne is a solid and comprehensive study, densely written and rich in ideas. It has the minor but important merit, not found in all French works of literary criticism, of providing a good index. There is also an extremely useful *bibliographie chronologique* which lists not only French fiction but translations and authentic memoirs.



Gustave Flaubert : an etching by David Hockney from the exhibition of his graphic work at Waddington Graphics, Cork Street, until May 1.

After the thaw

By Malcolm Jones

VLADIMIR SEDURO :
Dostoevski's Image in Russia Today
508pp. Nordland. $18.50.

It is a strange sensation to write a review of a book which itself reviews reviews of reviews of Dostoevsky's novels or, worse still, of works on them. That difficulty surmounted, however, Vladimir Seduro's new book offers much material of interest not only to the reader of Dostoevsky but also to anyone concerned with the impact of official Soviet literary policy on the treatment and reputation of a writer of Dostoevsky's stature.

Seduro's book takes up the story where he left off in his earlier well-known *Dostoyevski in Russian Literary Criticism 1846-1956*. The greater part of the text of *Dostoevski's Image in Russia Today* is devoted to the late 1950s, the crucial years in the struggle for Dostoevsky's rehabilitation. The first hesitant moves came in May 1954, and gathered momentum with the approaches to the seventieth anniversary of Dostoevsky's death in 1956 and the simultaneous movement in East-West relations *towards a relaxation of tension.*

The correct Marxist-Leninist attitude to Dostoevsky's works was, and in attenuated form remains, a matter of serious and earnest controversy. The problem was made more acute by the fact that while Lenin had more than *once* expressed himself in highly uncomplimentary terms about Dostoevsky, not a single positive remark about him could be found anywhere in his writings. The situation was greatly alleviated when passages from Bonch-Bruevich's memoirs were published in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* in the spring of 1958. This colleague recalled that while Lenin had attacked the reactionary tendencies in Dostoevsky's work, he had at the same time held him to be a writer of genius, who, within limits, had *given the world vivid* pictures of real life.

Seduro gives a detailed and, at times, fascinating account of the polemic which ensued in the late 1950s and afterwards. On the one side were those writers whose primary concern was to *draw attention* to the reactionary tendencies and berate those who failed to do so. On the other were those who, like Grossman, Bakhtin and Dolinin of the older generation, sought various to stress Dostoevsky's "humanism" and "sympathy for the poor and the oppressed", and were more concerned with his artistic techniques or with the publication of previously unpublished letters and notebooks.

The reader is taken through the polemics and critical battles surrounding the appearance of the last volume of Dostoevsky's letters in 1959 (Volume 1 had appeared in 1928), the ten-volume edition of his works (1956-58), two large volumes of "Unpublished Dostoevsky" (1971 and 1973), the thirty-volume Academy edition of his works (1972-) and the important criticism that began to appear in quantity in the mid-1960s. The author devotes considerable space to selected examples of the best stylistic criticism of these years, and his judgments are often of considerable interest.

All the same, his attempt to combine level-headed critical analysis with the enthusiasm of a devotee and a sharp polemical tone is not always successful. "The discovery of even a single new line from his writings", he tells us, "of a new fact, however minor, enriches Russian and international Dostoevski studies." If *this suggests a certain lack of proportion*, as much might be said of the book as a whole. It seems curious, to say the least, that fifty-two pages are devoted to a single eighty-six-page article published by Grossman in 1959, and 240 pages to the late 1950s as a whole, while 110 pages have to suffice for all the many important books and articles published in the Soviet Union in the 1960s and 1970s.

There are indications that the bulk of the book may have been written *some* time ago. One wonders how Seduro could have written "No scholar has yet given us a really scholarly compendium of Dostoevski's aesthetic views and artistic principles . . . " after 1966, the year in which R. L. Jackson's *Dostoevsky's Quest for Form* was published.

The last sixty-two pages are devoted to an appendix, "Dostoevski in Russian Emigré Criticism". This section contains some useful surveys, but is open to similar criticism. Some émigré writers are discussed in great detail, while the work of A. Z. Steinberg, for instance, whose contribution to Dostoevsky studies is sadly undervalued, rates no more than a mention in a half-page summary which he shares with Vyshoslavtsev. Finally, what a pity, and how frustrating, that a book of this kind has no index. Yet in spite of all this and the curious effect of Russian expressions and constructions in the English (actually a translation of Seduro's Russian manuscript), Seduro deals with a subject of undubited interest with the authority of one immersed in and fascinated by his material.

Dutch upper crust

By Simon Schama

PAUL-EMILE SCHAZMANN :
The Bentincks
The History of a European Family
262pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £4.95.

Despite its reputation as a model social democracy The Netherlands has preserved an upper crust as impermeably aristocratic as any elite in Europe. The landed dynasties who once served the court and army of the Stadhölders—the van der Duyn van Maasdam ; the Schimmelpenninck van der Oye ; the Zeeland Barons van Citters and the Holland Barons van Boetzelaar ; the van Heeckeren van Enghuizen and, not least, the several Bentincks of Diepenheim, of Schoonheten, of Rhoon and of Amerongen—all continue to populate the higher echelons of the Dutch civil and military services, and to crest the noteepaper of major Dutch industrial boards and banks. *So far from being* an anachronism, the prefix Jonkheer commands general deference in a society acutely sensitive to rank and standing. The columns of its quality press ritually tabulate the matrimonial alliances of status and fortune through which the patrician and landed families in The Netherlands consolidate their special place in Dutch culture.

While many of these families maintain estates in Utrecht, Gelderland and Overijssel—if only for the hunt—their *natural urban habitat* is as it has always been, The Hague, a decent way off from the raucous bourgeoisie of Amsterdam. Residing in the avenues of Wassenaar and commuting to government bureaux in the city they form a readily identifiable caste : their haircuts trim, their blazer-buttons burnished like Dutch doorknockers ; their pipes bought from Dunhills and their cravats from the Burlington Arcade. Though these days their Anglophilia is tempered with condescending sorrow it is sportingly upheld in membership of The Hague Cricket Club. Their esprit de corps is embodied in the sovereign quality of *deftigheid*, a *term* not easy to translate (and generally used in Amsterdam with wry irony), but which can be taken to denote stateliness of deportment, a dependable solidity in manner, word and deed.

The endurance of the Dutch aristocracy in what was once preeminently a mercantile, now an industrial society, is a phenomenon of considerable interest. Manifestly this elite is anything but dysfunctional. A historical analysis of its most distinguished clan, surviving over four centuries, and exercising great power and influence in both Dutch and British peerages, would have handsomely repaid serious scholarly inquiry. But Paul-Emile Schazmann seems to have had something quite different in mind. For *what he has produced in The Bentincks* is a kind of historical pageant, an interminably monotonous cavalcade in which successive generations of Bentincks process before the reader as sentinels of liberty and the embodiment of everything noble, wise and fair in European civilization. What really exercises Dr Schazmann is an immanent and immemorial European ethos, epitomized at various junctures by occasional Bentincks who have the prescience to be on hand to witness its major commemorative tableaux : the Union of Utrecht ; the peace of Rijswijk ; the crowning of William III ; the establishment of the Coal, Iron and Steel community ; the return of the Saar and so on. True, the precise definition of this ethos leaves something to be desired in the way of clarity. Dr Schazmann tells us :

> By studying the history of one family which has continuously reflected its times we shall see that Europe has been the product, not of chance, still less of a grindingly determinism, but of continuous exertions which are not extinguished with the individual.

By the end of the book, and several similarly mystical incantations later, the reader is none the wiser. But since one of Dr Schazmann's prime sources for the history of the 1688 revolution is listed as one T. B. Macaulay, it is not surprising that his rather opaquely expressed concept of European freedom turns out to be a sort of pan-Burgundian whiggism in which an unbroken line of benevolent Bentincks persevere to enthrone toleration without licence ; patriotism without aggression ; peace without appeasement and experiment without foolhardy speculation. Your average Bentinck, Lord George, for example, briefly leader of the Tories, is modestly billed at the head of Chapter 18 as "Champion of Religious Liberty, the Protection of Workers and Honesty on the Turf". And in this ancestral team-spirit, Adolphe Bentinck, the lust of the laudables, is made to go clanking down the corridors of Nato wearing the ideological armour of his Lotharingian forebears, dedicated according to the family pedigree to the defence of freedom.

It may be, of course, that the Bentincks really have been as remorselessly dull and as unimpeachably worthy (*though the grandest of them was impeached*) as Dr Schazmann makes them. But to erase from a two-dimensional portrait of Hans Willem, Earl of Portland and for a long while alter ego to William of Orange, all traces of *adroit opportunism, machiavellian* subtlety and diplomatic sophistry is to do that most versatile political engineer not a service but a slight. In Dr Schazmann's flock, though, there is no room for black or even slightly grimy sheep. Nothing is *permitted* to blot the family escutcheon. So that, for example, the awful fiasco of William Bentinck's first Indian assignment is lightly glossed over ; and the Duke of Portland's governorship of Jamaica at a time when the exploitation of slavery was nearly at its height is daintily described as a preoccupation with "the organization of labour, chiefly for the sugar, indigo and cocoa crops". Nor would one suppose from the brief sketch of Willem George Frederik that he had managed to suspend his inherited concern for patriotism and tolerance so far as to be able to collaborate in the Prussian *occupation* of the Republic in 1787 ; and to organize the systematic intimidation and witch hunt of all opponents of the restored Stadholder William V. Conversely, opposition to the House of Orange and the Bentincks—that of the de Witts, for example—is characteristically described as "underhand".

This, then, is a work of sanitized history, scoured of all unsightly impurities. It is also a work of *haute snobisme* written with much tugging of the forelock and crooking of the knee. Lesser breeds of Anglo-Dutch gentry such as the Keppels are dismissed out of hand as upstarts labouring under the insuperable handicap of lacking "the Bentinck stamp". Bentinck ladies are nearly always "charming" as their lords *are gracious*; Adolphe the *Ambassador* so felicitously combined the aristocratic with the common touch that he "was not above helping his secretary to write out invitations to his brilliant dinner parties". It is difficult to imagine for what readership this book is intended, since it is too unscholarly and slipshod for the specialist (its errors beginning on the inside flap of the dust-cover) and too bland for the general reader not diverted by innumerable digressions in which nothing very much happens except Bentincks begetting other Bentincks and Grand Events recorded in the wings ("Meanwhile Stalin died . . ."). When it is not borne aloft by vapourings on the ineffability of European liberty its prose minces *along* in the style of "Jennifer's Diary". But it does at least serve as a reminder that for those interested in Lord William Bentinck, that most busybodying of Indian governors-general, there is a spirited and well-researched study by John Rosselli recently available, and that a full-scale reappraisal of the career of the prodigious Portland is long overdue. All in all this act of sustained piety confirms the suspicion that the "authorized study" is rapidly becoming the contemporary substitute for the chantry. These days, prayers would come cheaper.

The teutonic obsession

By F. L. Carsten

ANDREW G. WHITSIDE :
The Socialism of Fools
Georg Ritter von Schönerer and Austrian Pan-Germanism
400pp. University of California Press. £14.65.

Today the name of Georg Ritter von Schönerer is almost forgotten, even in his native Austria. While in one-time rival and fellow anti-semite Karl Lueger is honoured by statues and a section of Vienna's principal street bearing his name, the Viennese would know who Schönerer was and why he was once famous. Yet he was the father of racial antisemitism in Austria and he supplied the young Hitler with many of his ideas. Over the Führer's bedside there hung Schönerer's motto :

> Without Judah, without Rome,
> We will build Germania's dome.

Schönerer's veneration of all things German and Germanic, his belief in a teutonic master race, his contempt for all Slavs, Jews and other inferior peoples, and equally his social radicalism, were handed down to the National Socialists who proceeded to put into practice what he had preached.

In view of the vast output of scholarly studies on National Socialism and its antecedents it is extremely surprising that "*no comprehensive* and objective study of Austrian pan-Germanism and its leader has hitherto now appeared", as Andrew G. Whiteside remarks in the introduction to *The Socialism of Fools*. Perhaps for Austria the subject is too touchy even today. At least, on this side of the Atlantic honour has been saved by an interesting London PhD thesis of 1963 (apparently unknown to Professor Whiteside) : John Christopher Fest, Warren's "The Politics and Influence of Georg Ritter von Schönerer", unfortunately unpublished. Both works cover the same ground.

Schönerer found his most enthusiastic followers among two distinct social groups : the members of the student corporations, especially the *Burschenschaften*, who adhered to a fervent German nationalism and antisemitism, and the small people of Vienna and other towns, the shopkeepers, craftsmen and artisans who felt threatened by the advance of big business, the banks and Jewish competition. Unfortunately, Professor Whiteside does not provide any social analysis of the followers of the Pan-Germans; at one place, he quaintly speaks of "the Schönerianer, most of whom were teachers, notaries, and innkeepers"—a very unlikely combination.

Yet Dirk van Arkel, in his *Antisemitism in Austria* (Leiden, 1966), has proved that such an analysis is possible. Schönerer's electoral appeal of 1885 was supported by 3,260 people who were all listed with their occupations and addresses. Rather surprisingly, almost half their number seem to have had rural occupations of one kind or another. Almost 15 per cent were craftsmen and artisans, about 4 per cent men with academic or semi-academic professions, and 6 per cent traders or shopkeepers. Exactly the same social groups later provided the early supporters and members of the National Socialist Party, not only in Austria. Among the 3,260 supporters, there were seventy-three teachers but not a single notary.

In 1888 a major crisis occurred in the fortunes of Schönerer and of his party. A day before the actual event, the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt* in a special edition announced the death of the German emperor William I—an announcement revoked in a later edition of the paper. Incensed by these contradictory reports, Schönerer and his followers in *Schandblattjuden* (infamous newspaper Jews) and demanded that they should ask for pardon on their knees. This famous episode is incorrectly described by *Professor Whiteside. In his version,* it was the editors who claimed that Schönerer had used these words ; in reality, he admitted them in his own evidence before the court, and the term used by him was not *Schandblatjuden* (Jews of infamous blood) as claimed in the book. Schönerer was tried and sentenced to four months of rigorous imprisonment and the loss of civil rights and his title as a nobleman : rights which he only regained many years later.

After the trial many of his close associates left Schönerer and the fortunes of his party began to decline. But they strongly revived during the Badeni crisis of 1897 caused by one of the perennial attempts of the Austrian Government to obtain a fairer treatment for the Czechs of Bohemia by granting equality to the Czech and German languages within the administration. This attempt caused an outbreak of fury and violence on the side of the German Austrians such as had never been seen before, and *this finally brought* down the Badeni government. The crisis enabled Schönerer to pose as the leader of the Austrian Germans who were allegedly suppressed by an alien government. The crisis and its results are described in *dramatic detail* in this book, above all the *furor teutonicus* which engulfed and threatened to destroy the whole Habsburg monarchy.

Yet the monarchy survived, and in the early twentieth century Schönerer's Pan-German party *declined further*, especially after the introduction of universal franchise in 1907. This benefited the modern mass parties, the Socialists and the Christian Social Party. It emerged that the pan-Germans could influence certain social groups but *were* unable to build up a mass party with a strong organization. This was at least partly due to Schönerer's personality ; he brooked no rival, and time and again violently quarrelled with his most loyal adherents. His anti-Catholic propaganda and rejection of the Old Testament as the "Jew Bible" did not increase his popularity in a country so strongly Catholic.

Hitler later considered the Austrian Germans too bourgeois and too respectable. But it seems very doubtful whether more revolutionary and more violent tactics, in the relatively stable conditions of the early twentieth century, would have helped to secure a large mass following. Perhaps Hitler was more justified when he claimed that the "Pan-German movement sold its soul to parliament". There the party never held more than a handful of *seats and had no chance* whatever of participating in the government. But the party also organized countless meetings and demonstrations ; Schönerer was a never-tiring propagandist ; and innumerable small sports and social clubs, political associations and trade unions were active in the pan-German cause.

This heritage was handed down to a later generation of Austrians and blossomed forth in the much more unstable and critical conditions of the 1930s. They were inspired above all by the phenomenal success of Hitler as the Chancellor and Führer of the Germans: the man who seemed destined to achieve so many of Schönerer's aims. We owe to Professor Whiteside the detailed description of his *activities, of his successes and his* failures, and above all of one of the vital historical roots of National Socialism. Indeed, at certain points he seems to anticipate later events, for example when he talks about "the revolutionary young desperados from the student and sport vereine" who followed Schönerer, or about "the revolutionary élan of the movement". Such terms can indeed be used for the 1920s and 1930s, but are they really justified for the relative stability of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? That the Habsburg monarchy possessed this staying power and stability is proved not only by its survival through many a deep crisis, but also by the fact that it required four years of bitter and sometimes disastrous warfare to bring about its disintegration.

TLS Commentary

Cross-Channel foray

The study of British and French history in France and Britain" is a good subject for a Franco-British get-together. The Franco-British Council, which was set up in the wake of the Pompidou-Heath agreements of 1971, brought together a group of historians in Edinburgh last weekend in order to discuss these matters. It is possible that there will be some practical outcome to their meeting, such as the creation of research fellowships, the writing of a collective work on Franco-British history, the collaboration of French and British historians in producing television programmes. But the chief work of the colloquy, which met under the chairmanship of Douglas Johnson, was to explore some of the ways in which French and British historians are currently working. Denys Hay and Richard Cobb had no difficulty in demonstrating the considerable number of British historians who are concerned with French history and who, in a variety of ways, have made important contributions to the subject, while François Bédarida had, as he put it, "la mission ingrate" of showing how, with certain distinguished exceptions, British history occupies only a small place in the work and research of French universities. This is all the more striking since British history is important in the secondary-school programme. Perhaps this is a sign of what some people consider to be a general French parochialism (le *maladie hexagonite*). Perhaps historical studies indicate national preoccupations, so that it could be said that the study of British history no longer provides answers to the questions which worry the French. Put in another way, Voltaire would not have praised the British so lavishly, had he not wished to attack the French so bitterly.

But if both the French and British historians were concerned over the apparent decline in the study of foreign languages which seems to exist on both sides of the Channel, they were united in seeing a considerable future in Franco-British history as such. While medievalists such as Philippe Contamine and Kenneth Fowler showed how they have to study periods of history where what is French and what is British is naturally intertwined, Theodore Zeldin suggested that the study of social history in the modern period would benefit from a similar approach. The particularisms of political history no longer existed if one was studying other forms of history; and if one was asking what it was that people cared about, if one was trying to work out, for example, their attitude towards youth or towards the family, then comparative social history could be the most illuminating form of social history. This collaboration in a new and developing form of historical investigation did not exclude more traditional areas, such as the history of ideas and of international relations, where Franco-British studies are also valuable. As seems inevitable when British and French historians meet, the 1930s and the year 1940 were evoked, with the older historians turning to their memories and the younger referring to the documents. But at least one apparent inevitability was avoided. One British historian was heard to remark with some satisfaction, as the colloquy was closing, "Nobody has once pronounced the word *conjoncture*".

Bienvenu à Stickney

It would be interesting to know whether the inhabitants of Stickney and of Boston in Lincolnshire have been commemorating the centenary of Paul Verlaine's passage among them. It was on March 31, 1875, that Verlaine arrived at the railway station of Sibsey, and was driven in a gig to Stickney by one of the pupils at the Grammar School. There he was to teach French and drawing until the end of March 1876, when he went to live in nearby Boston. He then tried to set himself up as a private tutor, an experiment which was unsuccessful and which probably lasted only a few months.

But this centenary is being celebrated by a small exhibition, "Sagesse in Lincolnshire", held in the Flaxman Room of the Library at University College London, Gower Street. The organizer is V. P. Underwood, the acknowledged authority on Verlaine and England and who, some forty years ago, interviewed the headmaster's widow and one of the schoolteachers who were present at the grammar school when Verlaine arrived on that March evening. Professor Underwood has followed up his work on Verlaine with a companion volume, *Rimbaud en Angleterre* (Nizet, 1976), and has taken the opportunity of presenting another collection of photographs and drawings in the neighbouring Gustav Tuck Lecture Theatre, which illustrates Verlaine and Rimbaud's visit to London three years earlier.

Verlaine seems to have been a popular figure in Stickney village, especially when his mother came to stay with him and everyone could see the care and courtesy with which he treated her. He himself was full of anecdotes about his stay, explaining how he was known as "Mister Mossou" and how a favourite game with his pupils was for them to ask him what was the French for "water". When he replied "L'eau" they would run away shouting "Waterloo". The examples which we are shown do not give one great confidence in Verlaine's English, nor in the quality of his drawings. His understanding of English customs must have been curious, for when he advertised for pupils in the Boston newspapers, it was to the Whale Inn that his future charges were supposed to present themselves. Small wonder that he never seems to have had more than three. But there can be little doubt that Stickney had a great influence on Verlaine, and the emphasis of Professor Underwood's exhibition is on the many ways in which his poetry, particularly the aptly named "Sagesse", echoes the Lincolnshire countryside, the words and sentiments of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, and of Bunyan, Tennyson and other English writers whom Verlaine discovered at this time. Perhaps "La vie humble aux travaux ennuyeux et faciles" is Verlaine's testimony to schoolteaching. If Verlaine saw in London William Gilbert's *Happy Arcadia*, with the actors dressed in Watteau costumes, then the author of *Fêtes Galantes* was looking backwards. But walking among the stiles and drains of Lincolnshire, the poet who was never without his notebook (as his headmaster's wife later recalled), was patiently preparing to break a long silence.

Kindly refrain

In his "Xmas Sequence 1975", the poet E. Jarvis Thribb wrote:

What shall I give
Keith ? The new
Heavy Sausage album ?

A puzzler, indeed, but not one that need vex the downy-cheeked bard for long when Keith's birthday comes round. It will be straight down to the Books Shoppe for a copy of *The One who Writes the Words for Elton John*, the complete lyrics of Bernie Taupin (143pp. Cape. £2.95). For the metropolitan roof, this is the ideal gift.

Mr Taupin himself is a rural person, born in 1950 into a Lincolnshire farming household that was drawn to the bright light of Oundby by Spital some eight years later. Bernie attended a Market Rasen secondary modern school, we learn, and (in an interesting phrase) "despite showing flair for writing . . . worked for a printing firm". At the Thribbish age of seventeen, he answered an advertisement for songwriters in the *New Musical Express*, offering himself as a wordsmith. Elton John wrote in at the same time (still under the name of Reg Dwight, presumably), claiming musical talent only. The partnership has prospered. But until now, only Elton ("This pasty little twit of a man", to quote his own foreword) has so far got the exposure; his scarcely sociant voice and Lego-lund costume winning out over self-admitted personal insecurity, muddy pianistics, and hair-loss.

Success has not been good for Taupin's talent, which at the start was small, English, but visible; now it is flatulent and mid-Atlantic. There has been no toughening of technique—Taupin is still slackly content with eye-rhymes, half-rhymes and vague assonances—and America has candled his subject-matter. What could once be taken for stumbling charm ("Anyway, the thing is what I really mean/Yours are the sweetest eyes I have ever seen") has lately degenerated into intercontinental Thribbism:

Goodbye Norma Jean,
From the young man in the twenty-second row,
Who sees you as something more than sexual
More than just our Marilyn Monroe.

The appeal on behalf of the soul behind the image is especially hard to take in performance from an artiste packaged, as like as not, in six-inch heels, a spite-coated glitter catsuit, and four-wide red plastic specs with windscreen wipers attached.

It's as a design event, appropriately, that the book will be celebrated. Alan Aldridge co-fantasized the cover, and co-edited the book with its designer, Mike Dempsey, who has lined up half a dozen Royal Academicians among the scores of illustrators here employed. Alas, most of the black-and-white graphics look as though they're longing to be in colour, and luminous Ektacolor for preference: only Betty Swanwick's weird Wise Virgins, cast as pregnant schoolgirls togged in pre-Raphaelite gauzes, have an art-like reticence about them. So the book—the shy and visibly serious Taupin organized it "just for my own satisfaction"—turns out to be speaking with His Master's Voice after all: slick, jokey, would-be beguiling—doing the hard sell with a useful face.

The bounty of Belfast

Where for only £1 can you buy a poetry magazine of over 200 pages plus seven poetry pamphlets amounting to about another 150 pages? The answer is: from Frank Grimsby, 70 Eglantine Avenue, Belfast BT9 6DY, and what you would be getting is the bumper fifteenth number of *The Honest Ulsterman*, with pamphlets by James Simmons, Harry Clifton, Tom Paulin, Seamus Heaney, Paul Muldoon, Alan Peacock and Patrick Williams. The magazine itself includes most of the young poets who have emerged in Northern Ireland in the past ten years, but also casts a specially wide net: there are good poems here from Norman MacCaig, Molly Holden and Peter Scupham, for instance. Among the younger Irish writers who have not had much of a hearing outside the pages of local magazines, Ciaran Carson seems worth mentioning, but the magazine has not survived, as some do, on choice exhibits. It is the sort (Harry Chambers's *Phoenix* was another) that has made its impact through inclusiveness and ebullience. The misprints, badly aligned offset copy and scriffess (and, alas, italicised) type are part of the image: who, at the price, is going to complain?

The Honest Ulsterman was started in May 1968 by James Simmons, and for some time it was subtitled "monthly handbook for a revolution". Simmons's editorship struck a note of passion, expectancy and commitment which has been maintained fairly consistently. An early association with Michael Stephens (b 1951) lent a scruffy student flavour to some of the first numbers, but there were compensations in Simmons's considered editorials or his taste for such poets as Tony Harrison or Gavin Ewart (indeed, the files of the magazine are a gold mine of uncollected Ewart). After Michael Foley and Frank Ormsby took over in December 1969 (and Ormsby alone in September 1972), Simmons maintained his presence largely through long admiring reviews (impatient with Heaney's *Wintering Out*, worrying about the "quite juicy prizes and perks to be scrambled for", disappointed with Longley, acute about Padraic Fiacc's celebrated anthology *The Wearing of the Black*, but at the same time meting out judicious praise to all where required). The emergence of the quality Ulster poets has naturally produced one or two growls of suspicion. In this fiftieth issue, Fiacc is unusing about the dangers of conventional success:

> I know three Faber poets personally and they have in common an "odour of sanctity". Talking to any one of them is always like talking to a holy picture. They answer back like old-time students for the priesthood and the weeest one of them all talks down his nose to you like a Bishop.

Imagining this sort of thing recounted by Dave Allen gives a great sense of fun to what little in-fighting there is in these pages. Fiacc finds Simmons an oppressive presence in the magazine, but he is surely wrong.

With fewer hang-ups than one might expect, and with the juggling between provincialism and nationalism reasonably resolved, the magazine seems set for another fifty issues. One forgives an uncomprehending review of Elizabeth Bishop or the somewhat arbitrary treatment of English poetry that leads to back-scratching with *Phoenix* or extensive treatment of John Birtwhistle rather than any central context. One forgives, too, the sheer bulk and unevenness of the material, since the weary reader is none the less forced to acknowledge the kind of editorial enthusiasm and fighting criticism which gets the best out of mixed talents. Even if you are feeling very mean, do spend at least 10p on Heaney's pamphlet, since his prose epiphanies of childhood are alone worth the whole £1.

Some recent prizes

James Tait Black Memorial Prize
Karl Miller *Cockburn's Millennium*

Hawthornden Prize
Oliver Sacks *Awakenings*

Jewish Chronicle Book Award
W. J. Fishman *East End Jewish Radicals*

Ally Sloper Award
for the Best Humorous Cartoonist
Leo Baxendale *The Willy The Kid Book*

Myths, monologues & cotton nightcaps

By J. S. Atherton

CLYDE DE L. RYALS:
Browning's Later Poetry 1871-1889
352pp. Cornell University Press. £8.15.

F. E. HALLIDAY:
Robert Browning His Life and Work
203pp and 22 illustrations. Jupiter. £3.95.

R. C. K. Ensor, in *England 1870-1914*, explaining the choice of the first date as the start of the fourteenth volume of the *Oxford History of England*, declares that "round about 1870 occurs a watershed in English life". He then lists several great men who died around that date and adds: "Browning, who died in 1889, had only a very select public until the eighties, but he too had shot his bolt. . . ." This appeared in 1936 and can be taken as expressing the received opinion. Even praise of Browning's later work had been reluctant. A typical example is Osbert Burdett in 1928: "In the last volumes we are never safe from beauties that make the strictures to which they incline us seem ridiculous." The strictures may be stated briefly as obscurity, wordiness, lack of music, lack of form, and a digressing tendency to concern himself with topics that were sordid and improper. The last of these has now become something of an attraction. The "lack of form" was demolished by G. K. Chesterton, in what is still the best short guide to Browning, as long ago as 1908. Ezra Pound, in his *ABC of Reading*, attacked "Victorian half-wits" who claimed that *Sordello* "was obscure". But Pound mentions nothing later than *Sordello*, and although Chesterton praised the later works he gave them very little space in his book.

It may be that increasing demands to "roll out a thesis"—if I may misapply a phrase from *Balaustion's Adventure*—have had some influence as the recent signs of interest in the works that followed *Sordello*. There has also been genuine discovery that these works contain much fine and original poetry but are relevant to our own age and influenced many of our modern masterpieces. Browning has recently been described as a nationalism reasonably resolved, the magazine seems set for another fifty issues. One forgives an uncomprehending review of Elizabeth Bishop or the somewhat arbitrary treatment of English poetry that leads to back-scratching with *Phoenix* or extensive treatment of John Birtwhistle rather than any central context. One forgives, too, the sheer bulk and unevenness of the material, since the weary reader is none the less forced to acknowledge the kind of editorial enthusiasm and fighting criticism which gets the best out of mixed talents. Even if you are feeling very mean, do spend at least 10p on Heaney's pamphlet, since his prose epiphanies of childhood are alone worth the whole £1.

A sketch by Browning's father; from F. E. Halliday's Robert Browning.

Browning to re-read the passage being discussed. In fact Professor Ryals seemed to be fulfilling what Sainte-Beuve called the purpose of criticism: "to teach others how to read". But there was one aspect that I found unsettling—the emphasis on the Christian content of the poem. For example, I think Browning shows Herakles bringing back Alkestis from the dead simply to put right his breach of etiquette in rejoicing in a house of mourning. It was *noblesse oblige*, not Christian charity. But as Professor Ryals shows the entire poem to be finer and far more beautiful than has been thought, this is a minor point.

He does not attempt to argue that there is any "*poetry*, if by such we mean beauty of verse" in *Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau*, but he finds that this description of Napoleon III's reverie of being in a London café confiding in a prostitute provides an "excellent presentation of character" by means of further complexities in the dramatic monologue.

Personally, and perhaps mistakenly, I see a similarity between Browning's work from 1871 onwards and *Finnegans Wake*. One simplistic way of reading *Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau* is to see it as a dream developing on various levels in which various characters appear. The dreamer is Napoleon III, but several critics have pointed out that the poem may be in part a reaction to various events in the life of Robert Browning. One feature that has been ignored is the mention of the Lake of Nemi at the conclusion. Browning's dreamer says:

> Dream had need
> Of the ox-whitening piece of prettiness,
> when one awakes.

What had seemed, in the dream, to be Chitumnus—where, according to Virgil, it "grazes the milk-white steer" and according to the myth, cattle were bleached by the water—was really the Lake of Nemi. It was there, as Browning the classical scholar would know (although Frazer had still to publish *The Golden Bough*), that the grimmer myth was enacted in which the King must die. This use of dream and myth seems to me to foreshadow Joyce's work in a remarkable way. It also adds another stage to the mental pilgrimage of Browning's Prince, one in which he is marked out for death.

Filine at the Fair is another monologue, but quite different from all the others. Professor Ryals says:

> I can describe it only as cinematic [with] its shifting perspectives in time and space. . . . What is significant is the internal action, the plunge into the depths of personality to discover what, if anything, is there *en fond*. The progression is not logical; everything seems to fade into something else by chance suggestion. It is an unreal world into which we are carried, and only with greatest difficulty do we follow the kaleidoscopic movement in which nothing appears substantial.

This could be a description of *Finnegans Wake*, but Browning's central figure is Don Juan who takes his wife Elvire to the fair and leaves her to wait while he slips off with Fifine, a circus dancer. The poem is prefaced by a prologue about a swimmer in the sea. This was taken as referring to Browning, as indeed it does, but it is made clear in the body of the poem that Don Juan is also the swimmer. Elvire at times seems a ghost or a statue, and there are indications that she is Browning's dead wife. Fifine could be the Lady Ashburton to whom Browning proposed marriage, or the lady who sued his old father for breach of promise. These suggestions occur only fleetingly but it is not surprising that the Victorians, unaccustomed to Joycean problems such as "Who's who, when everybody is somebody else?" were baffled by the poem. It is a woman's voice that ends it, in a climax that is at once forceful and tender:

> "What in the way of final flourish?
> Prose, verse? Try!
> Do and I" quoth I.
> "I end with—Love is all and
> Death is nought!" quoth She.

Which is obviously Browning imagining that his wife is sharing his experience of writing the poem.

Red Cotton Night-Cap Country has been described as bitter, morbid, and ungenial; in fact it is—as Professor Ryals says—"gay in tone. Friendly, playful, even self-mocking—ready to hear the rest? How good you are!"—it disguises a profundity of ideas under a surface of conversational banter". Although he quotes Hillis Miller's recent description of the poem as "a huge awkward monstrosity . . . [with] a wild, disordered, undulating vitality, like the buildings of the Spanish architect Gaudi", he finds the poem to be constructed in a strict form. It is a sonata, he says, or—more precisely—a "*sonate fantasque*", with four parts: first allegro, second andante, third scherzo vivace, fourth a triumphal climax, and finally a coda reaffirming the tonic. The introduction shows the narrator strolling with his companion through a landscape that seems so innocently drowsy she describes it as "white cotton night-cap country". The reply is a monologue which some readers might find prolix but does, as Professor Ryals says, set on foot the search "to penetrate appearances", so that the walk becomes "a quest, an exploration into history, human psychology, and phenomenal existence", and we learn that the night-cap could be the red of blood and the head-dress of the attendant at the guillotine, or even the flag of the Paris Commune.

The story told is one that filled French newspapers in 1871, when an Antoine Mollerio fell—or sprang—to his death from the top of a tower that he had himself had built. The poem's subtitle, "Turf and Towers", states the symbols around which the poem revolves, "Turf" meaning support and comfort or "the self-indulgent life", "Towers" the life of struggle and the pursuit of dominance. The theme is that of Ibsen's *The Master Builder* and Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*, but this does not imply that either Joyce or Ibsen ever read the poem. Nowhere else does Browning display—in Yeats's phrase—such "excited, passionate, fantastical imagination", and so allow it to run away with him that we have, for example, a long involved digression in which the hero's mistress is seen first as a caterpillar then as a butterfly. We are told "how she sucked/Assimilated juices, took the tint/Mimicked the form and texture of her food!". Yet the poem is basically, as Professor Ryals says, a naturalistic novel, developed by Browning's genius into "an intriguing and ultimately delightful philosophical poem".

For *Aristophanes' Apology* Professor Ryals, although he provides a satisfying analysis of the form and finds one lyric, "Thamuris Marching", a masterpiece, comes to the indisputable verdict that this "bold experiment" is easier to admire than like. It is, along with Browning's *Agamemnon*, meant only for Greek scholars. When Dr Furnivall protested that it required too detailed a knowledge of Aristophanic drama, Browning replied crushingly that the allusions required only "a knowledge of the Scholia, besides acquaintance with the 'Comicorum Graecorum Fragmenta', Athenaeus, Alciphron, and so forth". Browning worked for three years as it but Carlyle seems to have been the only one to admire it.

Fortunately Browning tried a different experiment with *The Inn Album*, to my mind the finest of his later poems. Here Professor Ryals's approach is less rewarding, perhaps because the formal structure matters here so much less than the whole poem. He explains that it "structures on a series of eight 'recognition scenes' which occur in 'a poem that combines the exterior method of drama with the interior method of the dramatic monologue within a narrative framework". In fact Browning has invented an entirely new form. Professor Ryals continues: "Observing the unities of time and place, and with only four characters to act out a very complex story, it is a technical tour de force and in its own way a masterpiece."

I could do without that "in its own way" which gives me the impression that Ryals did not enjoy the poem. He says that it "has not enjoyed a wide readership, probably because it engenders no close sympathy for any of the characters". The characters, all unnamed, are an eighteen-year-old girl who hardly appears, her confidante (the beautiful young wife of an elderly person), a dissolute lord who has seduced her, and a young millionaire whom the lord is teaching the art of life. In Browning's

day it was bound to be a failure. Not even the acceptance of the dramatic monologue excused his bringing in a Don Juan claiming to have improved a dull marriage by awakening the wife's sexuality and grumbling that he should be rebuked

as if
The fluid fire that lifts the torpid limb
Were a wrong done to palsy.

But it seems to me that for modern readers Browning has created a villain with whom one can sympathize, particularly when he pours out his love for the parson's wife, perhaps even more when confronted by the rich young man's taunting—"If you are so clever why are you not rich?" (If I may paraphrase Browning). As long ago as 1910 Hugh Walker found "a ring of Shakespeare" in some lines from this work which he described as "a noble poem" and "the great triumph of Browning's later career". It was the wife's speech describing her former love for her betrayer that he most admired:

I have danced through day
On tiptoe at the music of a word,
Have wondered where was darkness gone at night
Burst out in stars at brilliance of a smile
Lonely, I placed the chair to help me seat
Your fancied presence; in companionship,
I kept my finger constant to your glove
Glued to my breast; then—where was all the world?

There are other passages equally striking, and in spite of a perfunctory concluding account of events after the murder, when Browning seems to have lost interest, *The Inn Album* is one of the greatest neglected peaks of English literature.

Professor Ryals divides Browning's work after 1875 into two periods. The first—"from 1876 to 1883, from *Pacchiarotto* through *Jocoseria*"—concerned largely with criticism and reputation, is the result of the rejection of his work of the previous five years. The second, dating from 1884, shows a Browning who has "by and large shed fears for his fame and writes in a mellow mood of affirmation". From here Ryals examines all the works which most critics have never fully appreciated or have never previously received. Even *Jocoseria*, which Ryals admits to be "the least distinguished of Browning's later works", contains a phrase which has entered the language:

Never the time and the place
And the loved one all together.

Dramatic Idylls contains "Clive" and several other fine poems. "Clive" is much more telling when seen, as Professor Ryals sees it, as a comment on criticism, for "the beautiful irony of the poem is that we are permitted insight into two characters by a narrator who understands neither". It also contains that startling poem "Pan and Luna", equal to anything written by the later Yeats for the vehemence of its sexual imagery, and "in the most delicate and refined ottava rima". It should certainly be better known. So should "A Bean-Stripe". In *Ferishtah's Fancies*, almost all the *Parleyings* and much of *Asolando*. For all those Professor Ryals gives his own comments, not so much on form as on content and value, showing interconnections no one has previously noticed and carefully acknowledging previous work by other critics. It is to be hoped that it will be followed by other books on other aspects of Browning's undeservedly neglected works.

F. E. Halliday has already produced several literary guides; his *Thomas Hardy* was well received, and his *Robert Browning* is equally admirable. As an introduction to Browning it could hardly be bettered for he gives, in a short compass, an up-to-date account of the life, works and times—three complicated matters to weave into a single narrative. His account of Browning's life cannot be faulted. He finds little obscurity in the poems but regrets frequently the excessive length of the longer ones, and he gives adequate space to the later poems. "Doctor—" is "a short story that should be included in any anthology of comic verse". *The Inn Album*, he says, "has an admirable beginning and a splendidly dramatic, or melodramatic, ending, but a grossly inflated middle of speeches a hundred lines too long". The generally ignored "Pan and Luna" he notices as "sensuously beautiful". In brief, he has read all the poems, known them, and gives his own honest opinions. Some of his enthusiasms surprised me, *Colombe's Birthday* in particular, but his verdicts always deserve respect.

The weakness of the book is in the attempted connecting of the life and works with the times. To choose one of the worst examples, he writes: "The much heralded tercentenary of Shakespeare's birth was approaching, and while writing 'Sludge' in 1860 Browning was obviously re-reading the plays, for his poem is full of phrases from *Hamlet*." I can see no reason to drag in the tercentenary of four years later. The book would have been better without much of the background that is provided, which some readers might find confusing. Nevertheless it deserves a place in any general library.

Legal sagas

By Simon Keynes

HERMANN PÁLSSON (Editor and Translator)
The Confederates and Hen Thorir
Two Icelandic Sagas
139pp. Cananagate/Southside. £2.95 (paperback, £1.95).

Hermann Pálsson's translation of *Bandamanna saga* and *Hœnsa-Thóris saga* provides a welcome addition to the range of Icelandic sagas currently available to English readers because, as Pálsson explains, both texts have unusual features when viewed in the context of their literary genre. The former achieves a considerable comic effect with its satirical view of the operation of justice in medieval Iceland: the "conferences" of the title are eight powerful, but hypocritical and greedy, chieftains who bring a case against a man for bribing the judges and who in the event show themselves to be equally susceptible to bribery, and ideal targets for ridicule. The author of *Hœnsa-Thóris saga* adopts a more conventional attitude towards law and society, and in this case it is the interpretation modern scholars put on his motives that sets the saga apart from the rest, for he seems to have devised the details of the plot in order to illustrate the necessity of a legal innovation in his own day.

Pálsson devotes much of his introduction to a description of some general characteristics of the genre, so that the reader can appreciate the distinctive features of the two sagas, but unfortunately this has to be at the expense of other areas of literary criticism. For example, scant attention is given to the relationship between the two versions of *Bandamanna saga* and, more seriously, to the question of its literary antecedents.

Readers of Pálsson's previous translations will be familiar with the style he prefers to adopt: he does not always reproduce the idiom of the Icelandic text, and tends to simplify sentence construction in order to make the narrative flow more freely. As a result the sagas read rather like children's stories, though it is true that a more literal translation might produce stilted and artificial English prose which would be equally unlike the effect originally intended. A compromise is desirable and even possible, but inevitably the distinctive Icelandic prose style is, like poetry, what gets lost in translation.

To the Editor

Terrorism

Sir,—Walter Laqueur's review of a number of books on terrorism (April 2) raises a number of important questions. It is a pity that Laqueur, who correctly criticizes media persons, writers and the like for the indiscriminate use of the appellation "terrorist" and its application to the left as a whole, falls into the same trap himself.

After stating that money from Eastern Europe supplies the Palestinians with the weapons they need, he goes on to write:

The majority of the Fourth International, too, has for some years now favoured the armed struggle with all that it implies in some parts of the world. The state of affairs is further complicated by the fact that the dividing-line between Stalinists and Troiskyites which once used to be clear-cut has recently become blurred in some instances. . . .

As a member of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International, I would challenge Laqueur's sleight-of-hand technique in attempting to link the FI to terrorism. That we are in favour of "armed struggle" in some parts of the world is indisputable. But then so is Michael Foot. And even Laqueur himself suggests in his review that in some situations violence is the only resort. So why in that case imply the "majority of the Fourth International" is for terrorism?

I would challenge Laqueur to produce a single text or speech by any leader of the FI which advocates terrorism. He will not be able to find any. On the contrary he will be able to find numerous statements and interviews saying the exact contrary (cf, *Der Spiegel* interview with Ernest Mandel, the leading theoretician of the FI after he had been banned by the West German government from entering the country).

Secondly, it is somewhat unfortunate that Laqueur does not specify on what precise question the distinction between Trotskyism and Stalinism has "become blurred". In a contradistinction to Stalinism and Stalinist regimes the FI and its militants in those countries are strong advocates of proletarian democracy, in other words the right of those of all political tendencies to form their own parties and distribute their own literature and publish their own journals. We are for the institutionalization of elective organs and for the rigid separation of the party and the state. This approach also divides us from the supposedly "leftist" Stalinist parties which tend to manipulate the masses and prevent the emergence of autonomous organs of power in pre-revolutionary situations. Thus the differences between Stalinism and Trotskyism are not simply on the question of the armed struggle (though in the case of Chile we did centre our critique of the CP on its role in fostering pacifist illusions in the working class in relation to the Chilean army. History has, unfortunately, vindicated our position on that particular question).

It is certainly not the case that the Fourth International is advocating "armed struggle" in Western Europe or North America, either in the cities or the countryside. We have not issued any manifesto calling on the workers and peasants of Brooklyn to rise in arms, not to mention the struggle against the kulaks of South Yorkshire.

On a general level it seems to me that Walter Laqueur has tended to concentrate exclusively on individual terror or acts carried out by small groups. Surely terror on a massive scale in this epoch is applied by the state. Two clear examples would be the mass terror instigated by the Stalinist state in the USSR in the 1930s, the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the terror raids on Dresden and the large-scale terror bombing of Vietnam by the United States not so long ago. One could add the regimes based on terror which exist in Brazil and Chile, South Africa and Rhodesia, Iran and Haiti—all of which enjoy excellent relations with the bourgeois democratic states of North America, Western Europe and Japan. Surely Walter Laqueur will agree that state terror is the phonomenon which should really be studied and understood. And when it is, many of the individual terrorists will begin to realize that not all their acts put together can get rid of it without the mobilization of the masses.

TARIQ ALI.
17 Haslemere Road, London N8.

Among this week's contributors

J. S. ATHERTON is the author of *The Books at the Wake*, 1959.

JOHN BAYLEY's books include *Pushkin*, 1971.

E. G. W. BILL is Librarian of Lambeth Palace.

KEVIN BROWNLOW directed the film *It Happened Here* (1966). His books include *The Parade's Gone By*.

F. L. CARSTEN's *From Schönerer to Hitler* will be published this year.

NICHOLAS FAITH's book's include *Money Matters*, 1973, and *Wankel*, 1975.

ROBERT FOX is the author of *The Caloric Theory of Gases*, 1971.

F. W. J. HEMMING's books include *Culture and Society in France, 1848-1898*, 1971.

DEREK HORWOOD is Director of the Middle East Centre at Oxford.

NORBERT LYNTON is the author of *Kiev*, 1964, and *The Modern World*, 1968.

N. J. MACKINTOSH is the author of *The Psychology of Animal Learning*, 1974.

D. J. MCKITTRICK is with the Rare Books Department at the University of Cambridge Library.

RICHARD MAYNE's books include *The Europeans*, 1962.

KENNETH O. MORGAN's books include *Wales in British Politics: 1868-1922*, and *Keir Hardie*, 1975.

BRIAN MONTGOMERY's *A Field Marshal in the Family* was published in 1973.

FRANK MUIR is co-author (with Denis Norden) of *You Can't Have Your Kayak and Heat It*, 1973.

V. G. MYLNE is the author of *The Eighteenth-Century French Novel*, 1965.

H. T. NORRIS's *The Tuaregs: Their Islamic Legacy and its Diffusion in the Sahel* has just been published.

DAVID PATTERSON is Principal of the Leo Baeck Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies.

SIMON SCHAMA's *The Breaking of the Dykes: Revolution and Government in the Netherlands, 1780-1813* will be published this year by Collins.

PETER A. THOMAS is Chief Librarian at the Consumers' Association, London.

R. S. TURNER's most recent book is *Amazing Grace*, 1975.

Tony Godwin

Sir,—Tony Godwin was exceptional in the contribution that he made to publishing, not least in his encouragement of young talent on both sides of the Atlantic. We would like to commemorate these aspects of his life and work with a Tony Godwin Award.

Every year the recipient of this award chosen alternately in the United States and in Great Britain, will be able to spend not less than four weeks, learning about publishing in the other country, as the guest of a publishing house. The award will be given to the person most responsible for publishing work—fiction, non-fiction or poetry—which best reflects Tony Godwin's own enthusiasms and ambitions for the books that he published. The judges will, accordingly, in making their choice, look for intellectual exoitement, literary excellence, insight into social change, sheer enjoyment or for publishing imagination and integrity.

It will usually be given to editors under thirty-five years old, but the judges will have the right to award it to anyone else, older or in a different field of publishing, whose achievement they consider outstanding.

A reciprocal committee is being established in the United States. We need to cover travelling costs and basic living expenses; and we hope that all Tony Godwin's friends, colleagues and writers will contribute to what we believe will be a fitting memorial to his adventurous spirit and his work.

Contributions may be sent to: Tony Godwin Award, c/o Anton Felton, FCA, Hollybush House, Hadley Green, Barnet, Hertfordshire.

AL ALVAREZ.
CHARLES CLARK.
ANDRE DEUTSCH.
ANTON FELTON, FCA.
DEBORAH ROGERS.
RONALD SEGAL.
WILLIAM SHAWCROSS.
(Tony Godwin Award Committee)

The Highway to Abstraction

Sir,—Professor Rosenblum (March 26) sires me somewhere between the Knight of the Sad Countenance and the Night of the Long Knives, for my treatment of his book, *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition*. But readers of the *TLS* will recall that styles of reviewing differ as much as styles of writing; had I undertaken the sort of synopsis he prefers, my discussion would have been a good deal longer than his book, which called for commentary at every point. Faced with the task of dealing with two books, one of them (Professor Rosenblum's) vast in its implications, in the short space of a review, I chose to devote a paragraph to outlining his aims, chiefly in his own words, and then to select a few type-instances where his methods fall far short of what might have been expected. Perhaps to do so was to sacrifice the general argument of my review, which hoped to draw attention to the unsatisfactory state of nineteenth and twentieth-century art-historical studies. Readers of Professor Rosenblum's book will be able to test the validity of his letter, where, in a helpful allusion to his figures 19 to 21, he gives a further example of that extreme carelessness in visual analysis which I sought to illustrate with other instances in his book.

The polemical tone of my review I caught from Professor Rosenblum himself, but the looseness of my argument, and my obvious prejudices (which I regret) have led him and Mr Wiedmann (March 12) to misread me. So far from rejecting iconographical study in the periods in question, I made several of my examples depend on it; I have reservations only about the method of some recent essays in *Motivkunde*, a new name without a new idea.

Most seriously, Professor Rosenblum and other readers have suspected that I maliciously accused him of over-hasty preparation. I was at pains to state the reverse. It seemed to me that a thesis which had occupied him for a number of years could not be excused by appealing to its presentation with the usual risks attending the transposition into a book of a series of lectures whose persuasiveness may have depended in good part upon techniques of audio-visual sequence and informal delivery rather than upon the leisurely scrutiny of an argument on a printed page (page 7).

I have nothing against slide-lectures; and I have enjoyed watching some masters of the art. Professor Rosenblum is not among them. Like Anita Brookner (March 12), I have learnt a good deal from his earlier publications, but they were not under review on this occasion.

JOHN GAGE.
Hall Farm, Mannington, Norwich NR11 7BB.

Michel Saint-Denis

Sir,—I have been authorized to write a biography of Michel Saint-Denis and I would be grateful if any of your readers would loan any letters or papers or send me reminiscences relevant to his life and work, both in the theatre and with the BBC during the war. Materials would be acknowledged, safely guarded and carefully returned to the owner.

A. C. SCOTT.
C/o Madame Suria Saint-Denis, Bloomfield Terrace, London, SW1.

'Confessio Amantis'

Sir,—I would like to correct a factual error which is symptomatic of some general misrepresentation, in his review (February 20) of *Love, the Word and Mercury*, my critical study of John Gower's *Confessio Amantis*. R. J. Schoeck moves rather effortlessly from misrepresentation to vilification: "It is a measure of generous scholarship", says Schoeck, "that it is magnanimous to those on whose shoulders it stands." What follows is a catalogue of scholarly works presumably he has consulted—or worse, consulted but not acknowledged—and a strong implication that my interpretation of the *Confessio Amantis* is not only defective but, in its refusal to acknowledge previous scholarship, dishonest.

The factual error, which may interestingly comment on the review in general, is in the following quotation: "One could not tell from the acknowledgments or text of this book that there had been an earlier (1950) dissertation at the University of North Carolina which argues that *Confessio Amantis* is an elaborate synthesis of materials taken from manuals of religious instruction".

The dissertation in question was written in 1950 by Father J. B. Dwyer. Allow me to quote from page 1 of my book: "The devotional manual, according to Father J. B. Dwyer, had a principally devotional function, and its contents were chosen and arranged as a preparation for and a supplement to prayer. For those who could not read, sermons and conferences, or the spoken word, took the place of the manuals." These remarks are footnoted to Dwyer's dissertation (his 2 of Chapter 1, page 193 of my book), and full reference to Dwyer's dissertation is in the bibliography, page 188. There is, of course, a reference in the index, page 193.

Given the presence of J. B. Dwyer on page 1, may I not legitimately wonder how far into my book Mr Schoeck read? That he has not examined Dwyer's dissertation is also clear, since he seems to believe that my use of the Fashion model to explicate twenty-two stories of the *Confessio Amantis* is taken largely from Dwyer. As evidence that my own work is not first-hand, Schoeck cites a review of research ("Mainly 1939-1959") edited by John H. Fisher, which itself not only omits Fisher's own book on Gower, but the achievements of Wickersheimer, Murphy, Bennett, Pearsall, Peck, Burrow, and C. S. Lewis, all of whom I acknowledge in my introduction.

The latter kind of reviewer's wrong we must accept, so to speak, as part of fortune's abuse; but we should not accept factual distortion.

PATRICK J. GALLACHER.
The University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87131.

Listening

Sir,—The writer of your Country on Edward Albee's *Listening* (April 2) should have been more careful to conceal how little he was paying attention.

The author, as Voice, was heard narrating the scenes with Jerry's a fact which was confirmed by the Woman after (I quote) number 16.

Since the Man commented in his opening speech on the dryness of the mountain, and since what dryness was one of the main themes of the dialogue, it is not surprising that his earlier publications, but they were not under review on this occasion.

G. F. ROE.
The Library, The University of Sheffield, Sheffield S10 2TN.

Boys and girls together

By N. J. Mackintosh

ELEANOR EMMONS MACCOBY and CAROL NAGY JACKLIN:
The Psychology of Sex Differences
634pp. Stanford University Press: Oxford University Press. £7.

Some of the more obvious differences between the sexes may be the source of much simple pleasure. The less obvious differences in temperament, ability and behaviour are certainly the cause of much intellectual nonsense. Brutish assertions about the proper place of women in society are only rarely tempered with the wit of Sam Johnson. Shrill protests about male oppression become more strident as the instances of oppression they point to become less palpable. But, as John Stuart Mill noted over a hundred years ago:

> In regard to that most difficult question, what are the natural differences between the two sexes—a subject on which it is impossible in the present state of society to obtain complete and correct knowledge—while almost everybody dogmatizes upon it, almost all neglect and make light of the only means by which any partial insight can be obtained into it. This is, an analytic study of the most important department of psychology, the laws of the influence of circumstances on character.

Mill would surely have approved of *The Psychology of Sex Differences*, the work of two American social psychologists, which summarizes the contribution of academic psychology to this ever interesting topic. Certainly, he could no longer complain that this branch of psychology is neglected: a notable feature of the book is an annotated bibliography, covering over 1,400 references, three quarters of which are to articles published within the past ten years. It seems reasonable to hope that this awesome amount of industry will have produced a few partial insights into the influence those who have already made up their minds? For as Mill again noted:

> So long as an opinion is strongly rooted in the feelings, it gains rather than loses in stability by having a preponderating weight of argument against it. For if it were accepted as a result of argument, the refutation of the argument might shake the solidity of the conviction; but when it rests solely on feeling, the worse it fares in argumentative contest, the more persuaded its adherents are that their feeling must have some deeper ground, which the arguments do not reach.

In the end, one can only hope that the voice of reason will prevail. Even more impressive than Eleanor Emmons Maccoby and Carol Nagy Jacklin's summary of a vast body of research is their cool, dispassionate analysis of that research, the intelligence and persistence with which they expose myth, dispel dogma, distinguish truth from error and both from ignorance. When all is said and done, what can we safely say about the differences between the two sexes? Professor Maccoby and Dr Jacklin devote seven chapters to analyses of research on differences in perceptual and intellectual abilities, temperament, emotions and social behaviour, and two chapters to a discussion of theories of the development of these differences. In their final chapter, they list a small number of differences that seem relatively well established, a larger number for which they conclude, there is still no convincing evidence one way or the other and, the largest number of all, several totally unfounded beliefs about differences between the sexes.

There is by now reasonably convincing evidence that girls, on average, perform better than boys on verbal and linguistic tests, but less well on visuo-spatial and mathematical tests. It is also well documented that, in humans as in most (but not all) mammalian species, males are more aggressive than females. These are virtually the only differences which Professor Maccoby and Dr Jacklin accept as convincingly demonstrated—and it must, of course, be remembered that to accept the reality of these differences does not imply that they are biologically determined rather than culturally conditioned. Among the questions which they believe to be still unanswered are whether girls are more maternal or "nurturant", less competitive and more compliant than boys, and whether there are any great differences between the sexes in timidity and anxiety (in this last case, they are perhaps being unduly cautious). Finally, they argue that there is little or no foundation for the belief that girls have lower self-esteem and are less ambitious than boys, or that they are in general better at learning by rote and worse at tasks requiring analytic understanding of the principles involved.

This is a modest set of conclusions to distil from several decades of energetic research, and one more over that offers little comfort to the holders of received opinion. It will neither please those who believe that women are inherently more suited to, say, domestic or secretarial work because they are naturally more dependent and submissive than men, and better at routine work that places little emphasis on analytic understanding; nor will it satisfy those who assert that a society dominated by masculine interests has forced women to be submissive, destroyed their ambition and brainwashed them into a semblance of passive conformity. The research reviewed in this book suggests that each of these views is pretentious nonsense: if the sexes simply do not differ in these sorts of ways, the question whether the differences are biologically determined or culturally conditioned does not arise.

The High Priestess, the second card in the Tarot pack, vulgarly known as "the Papess" or "Pope Joan". She represents the magic of nature and the spirit of seriousness, in contrast with the first card, the Juggler, who represents the spirit of play. The book she holds on her knee is the Torn. "The design, taken from the Marseilles Tarot, is by Leslie MacWeeney, who also drew the other "major trumps" — twenty more numbered cards and the unnumbered Fool — for Arland Ussher's The Twenty-two Keys of the Tarot *which was first published in 1953 and has just been reissued (46pp. Dublin: Dolmen Press. Paperback, £1).*

Both views, however, are so deeply rooted that their proponents will surely resist this conclusion. If the results of psychological research do not conform to their conception of the world, so much the worse for psychological research. It would be a rash psychologist who refused to take this reaction seriously, and Professor Maccoby and Dr Jacklin are cautious in their conclusions and frequently critical of the research they discuss. There are several obvious problems. Sometimes it is apparent that psychologists have been asking the wrong question. Numerous investigators, for example, have asked whether girls are more sociable than boys, but there is no single answer to this question. In certain situations, girls are indeed more likely to interact with and obey adults than are boys, but boys, on the other hand, are more likely than girls to play in a large group together, and may be more easily influenced by pressure from that group. Failure to distinguish between interaction with adults and interaction with other children might lead to the misleading conclusion that girls are neither more nor less sociable than boys.

Sometimes one may wonder whether the psychologist is really measuring the trait which he claims to be. Studies of competitiveness, for example, have frequently used a game called the Prisoner's Dilemma, whose central feature is that if the two players start "competing" they will both lose. This is not what we normally understand by competition. Similarly, one widely cited study claimed to show that girls were more likely than boys to show "indirect" aggression towards a newcomer who tried to join their small group. The cagerly accepted implication was that girls are not really less aggressive than boys, but merely express their aggressive impulses in more devious ways. Professor Maccoby and Dr Jacklin are suitably sceptical of this account, which interprets a tendency to move away from or ignore the newcomer as evidence of aggression rather than, say, plain shyness.

It is easy to find examples of misconceived or misinterpreted research, however, it is no less easy to see that our own preconceptions about the world may distort our perceptions. It is a commonplace medical assumption that women suffer more than men from neurotic and psychosomatic disorders, but one controlled study suggests this is partly because doctors are simply more inclined to diagnose a given set of symptoms as evidence of neurosis if they are led to believe the patient is a female rather than a male. Teachers consistently report that boys are more active than girls, but objective measurements of gross bodily movement often reveal absolutely no differences between the two sexes—even in a situation where a teacher reports that the boys are being more active. It is at least possible that the teachers are influenced by their preconceived stereotype of energetic, active boys and quiet, passive girls. Even if they really are responding to some objective difference in the behaviour of their boys and girls, it is probably misleading to describe this difference as one of activity level as such.

It is difficult enough to establish with any confidence the ways in which the sexes do differ. It is harder to establish how such differences may have arisen. Social scientists have a vested interest in attributing them to arbitrary social factors, and are here ready to follow Mill in his assumption that

> however great and apparently ineradicable the moral and intellectual differences between men and women might be, the evidence of their being natural differences could only be negative. Those only could be inferred to be natural which could not possibly be artificial—the residuum, after deducting every characteristic of either sex which can admit of being explained from education or external circumstances.

This prejudice in favour of social factors produces much sloppy thinking: many psychologists, and most sociologists, appear to believe that they have only to show some difference in the way parents treat boys and girls or in society's expectations of them, to have discovered the cause of any difference in their behaviour or temperament. It does not follow: we need a theory of the development of behaviour and temperament. We also need reliable evidence that parents do treat boys and girls differently. Here again, the authors perform a notable service in disentangling fact from fiction. What could be more plausible, for example, than to suppose that boys are more aggressive than girls because parents encourage their sons to fight but discourage their daughters from engaging in such unfeminine behaviour? Surprisingly, however, Professor Maccoby and Dr Jacklin are able to cite several recent studies which suggest that parents simply do not discriminate between their children in this sort of way—and may even punish boys more than girls for fighting (perhaps because boys fight more in the first place). Theorizing about the causes of sex differences which ignores this sort of evidence is liable to be singularly vacuous.

In spite of, or perhaps because of, this bias in favour of social or environmental explanations, there are few satisfactory theories of the development of differences between the sexes. Freud's account of the acquisition of sexual identity is briskly dismissed in one short paragraph, and Professor Maccoby and Dr Jacklin tend to favour a view, most explicitly stated by Lawrence Kohlberg, which suggests that young children first acquire a sense of their own sex: identity, and then learn to conform to their own image of the role prescribed by society for that sex. This sounds reasonable enough, but one cannot but notice how loose is the relationship between such a theory and the evidence provided by the sort of psychological study discussed in this book. In spite of Mill's opinion to the contrary, it has proved rather easier to obtain evidence pointing to the importance of biological factors.

Thus the peculiar pattern of resemblances between parents and their same-sexed and opposite-sexed children in spatial ability suggests strongly suggests that this ability is partly determined by a sex-linked recessive gene, and this is sufficient to explain why men have on average greater spatial ability than women. Similarly, there is abundant evidence that aggressive behaviour in animals is partly controlled by male sex hormones, and it would be surprising if the difference between males and females found in our species were not also related to hormonal differences.

That it is difficult to bring evidence to bear on the validity of environmental or social theories of the origins of differences between the sexes does not necessarily mean those theories are wrong, let alone that these differences are natural or biologically determined. It does suggest that a certain diffidence is in order before one starts glibly attributing any differences to specific social factors. It may also suggest that one should range around somewhat more widely than the authors have done in the search for evidence.

They have confined themselves rather strictly to an evaluation of current social psychological research. No more than passing reference is made to anthropological evidence, and their approach is determinedly unhistorical. Even within their own terms of reference this is surely a mistake: there is, for example, an unexplained discrepancy between the results of several recent studies which have found that boys are no more permitted or encouraged by their parents to fight than are girls, and a large survey published in the mid-1950s which reported that mothers were much more tolerant of boys fighting than they were of girls doing so. Professor Maccoby and Dr Jacklin do not consider the simple possibility that social attitudes might have changed in the past twenty years.

It would be wrong to end on a churlish note. This is a most impressive book, full of scholarly virtue. It is fair, thorough, and sane. It would be nice to believe that it will bring a touch of realism to a debate too often marked by a determination to ignore empirical evidence.

Blood and sand

By H. T. Norris

JOHN MERCER :
Spanish Sahara
264pp. Allen and Unwin. £8.25.

John Mercer's *Spanish Sahara* is described in the blurb as the only modern work on the subject. As far as the English reader is concerned this is certainly true, and its publication could hardly be more timely. J. Ludwick's *The Forbidden Coast* has long been out of print, and it only touched the littoral of this territory. The survey of north-west Africa edited by Nevill Barbour (1959) made brief reference, and though accurate was hardly comprehensive. Now this coast and hinterland is no longer Spanish. It is being fought over by claimants which are familiar names to readers of the daily newspapers.

This general study has chapters which are likely to remain definitive. Others will date. Chapter 15, "The Year of Climax, 1975", is already out of date. The text was in the press before "the green march" occurred, and some of its predictions have been made meaningless by events. None the less, the reader will learn much from the farcical story of the evolution of the Spanish Saharan crisis. John Mercer has analysed it with skill and wit. If his deductions are correct, the era of Spanish enterprise in this wasteland of rock, sand, phosphates, fishing harbours and archaeological sites will be remembered in the future as perhaps the most quixotic of all episodes in Western colonialism. The area's future seems tragic. At worst it may mean a widening conflict between Algeria and Morocco, and it may mean permanent insecurity for northern Mauritania which has been the target of attacks by the Polisario. At best it may mean a tenuous occupation of the former Rio de Oro and a somewhat tighter integration of the western Sbiya, at Hassan's behest, into Morocco's hinterland; in either case the Saharaois will hardly be the beneficiaries.

The book is full of useful reference material. Mr Mercer is an archaeologist and a geographer. For this reason his chapters on geology and the landscape, natural history, and prehistory are probably the most authoritative. The prehistory of the Spanish Sahara will be of considerable interest to pre-historians, and this chapter is illustrated by lively drawings of artifacts and rock-engravings. The chapters on nomad society and nomad culture draw upon Julio Caro Baroja's unsurpassed *Estudios Saharianos* (Madrid, 1955), but they also incorporate the author's own observations. New dimensions are given to the inner working and tensions of Saharaui society by the informative chapters on daily work and life, mineral prospection and mining, and the development of the territory since 1940. Statistics and tables are provided.

The one great masterpiece of Saharaui architecture and settlement, the Smara *qasba* of Shaykh Ma' al-Aynayn is discussed, and a neat plan based on that of Baroja is printed. However, I cannot recall that the *qasba* was ever deemed a *ribat* as the author maintains, nor can I recall having seen the inscription over Bab Heyen which bears the *basmalah*. If the author is correct (page 155), did the Spaniards restore this inscription during their Islamic honeymoon before their hasty departure? Baroja explicitly states that "Hoy se encuentra borrada casi".

The weakest chapters are those on Berber history to AD 1400, and Portuguese and Spanish incursions 1434-1688. This is partly because of insufficient historical focus, though it is fair to say that in the latter chapter there are valuable observations on coastal commerce, warfare and Sahara n manners and customs, some of which are unfamiliar. Prior to 1400 we are in the elusive age of Almoravid, Hilali and Ma'qil migration and mythology, where a good deal of religious and tribal activity was centred in the then non-existent "Spanish Sahara", though where exactly it was centred is still unknown, and I fear is likely to remain unknown for the foreseeable future.

In this part of the book there are several factual errors which could mislead. Ibn Tashfin did not cross to Spain to help the weakened Umayyad Caliphate against Alphonso VI (page 73) since by then it was the age of the Muluk al-Tawa'if *reges de taifas*. In 1644 the leader of the Sanhaja "revolt" against the Banu Hassan was not Abu Bakr ibn Umar al-Lamtuni, Almoravid leader of the eleventh century (page 75) but Awbeck al-Daymani, rifled Nasir al-Din. Nor did Ibn Battuta visit Walata via Timbuctoo in the eleventh century (page 91) but probably in the year 1352.

There is a useful bibliography, particularly in its introduction of Spanish source material. The varied photographs of local life enhance the text. To Mr Mercer, Mauritania is an extension of the Spanish Sahara, and his argument tends to reflect a point of view which fails to take sufficient account of the far greater importance of the states or communities which bordered the Spanish Sahara to the north and to the south. None the less, the author should be congratulated for assembling rare and inaccessible material and presenting it in a condensed yet readable, well-written book. It may be many years before serious research can again take place in the region he describes. His book is therefore unlikely to be superseded.

Our man in Caracas

By Malcolm Deas

MIRIAM HOOD :
Gunboat Diplomacy 1895-1905
Great Power Pressure in Venezuela
202pp. Allen and Unwin. £5.50.

Miriam Hood's book *Gunboat Diplomacy 1895-1905* is a meditation on the history of Venezuela and the Anglo-German blockade of 1902, and will serve to introduce English readers to lesser-known aspects of both. The meditative parts of the book certainly raise a great many more questions than they answer, which should be no surprise to those acquainted with Venezuelan historiography for the century after independence, which is only beginning to receive detailed attention. Mrs Hood presents a less enthusiastic version of the positivist Vallenilla Lanz, perhaps the most brilliant of Venezuelan historians, and she could have done worse than do that. She is also able to add apercus of her own on the connection between fluctuations in export prices and public order, and on the fiscal state of the country.

As diplomatic history the book offers the beginnings of a corrective to the suffocatingly anglo, euro or *gringo*-centric views that have prevailed among apologists and critics of the great powers, most of whom have been incapable of laying their hands on, or reading, the simplest and most accessible Venezuelan texts, or of showing the slightest extra-legalistic insight into the state of affairs prevailing. Mrs Hood does argue convincingly for a certain divergence, in tone at least, between British diplomats on the spot and their correspondents in London. She is right also in contending that the nice distinctions made by the Foreign Office were frequently not understood, perhaps not meant to be understood, by the Venezuelan government. She shows how Venezuelan politicians at times positively sought British diplomatic guarantees to raise their credit, and so themselves clouded the issue. She is good on dubious claims, and on the sort of *juror consularis* brought by fruitless negotiations with a weak government that makes a weapon of its own confusion and delay: ministers and consuls certainly requested gunboats very much more frequently than the Foreign Office ever contemplated dispatching them, and often in contradiction to the interests of their own merchant community, among the first to suffer from a bankrupt government "forced to pay up". She also points to a certain levity in the British response: requests from Venezuela to make Trinidad less of a haven for revolutionaries, a matter of frequent and pressing concern — "Do not let us," Salisbury minuted, "stop attacks on Guzman Blanco more than we are obliged to do."

From her book one concludes that the British participated in the blockade after years of deteriorating relations, at the urging of the particularly bitter British minister in Caracas, W. H. D. Haggard, and in the direction of the not wholly German Lansdowne and with the green light from the United States because they could think of no very good reason not to, rather than from any very positive desire or hope for relief. They did get £5,000 for "British claims", and doubtless slightly prompter attention for the next. Mrs Hood also argues that the blockade clarified the ideas of Theodore Roosevelt, and of Juan Vicente Gómez, always punctual to pay old debts and to avoid new ones. She is less perceptive about Cipriano Castro, whose government was the object of the demonstration, and whose body was ceremoniously buried in his native Venezuela at last year. Castro did not believe that the blockade would succeed, but when it did, put it to the best advantage and used the national reaction to consolidate his own position; he ruled until illness forced him to Europe six years later. Castro's agility can be seen in Elías Pino Iturrieta's *Castro—Epistolario Presidencial* (Universidad Central de Venezuela) and in the excellent *Boletín del Archivo Histórico de Miraflores*, for which historians must thank Senator Ramón J. Velásquez.

MICROPUBLISHING

The uses of microform

By Derek Hopwood

Microfilms have been with us for many years now; microfiches are more recent. Both are useful rather than attractive. They are kept in metal drawers, read in dark corners and are unlikely ever to be counted among the great treasures of a library.

Three factors, however, have turned the librarians' attention to microform—space, availability and cost. Diminishing space is a problem that haunts all librarians. Shelf-space that seemed adequate for ten years' growth unaccountably disappears in less than half the time. Long runs of periodicals, newspapers and official materials are inexorable space-fillers and on the whole constitute material that is not in constant demand. Annual binding is now almost prohibitively expensive, especially in the case of newspapers, and produces large unwieldy volumes. One year's run of a newspaper, bound and standing on the shelf, occupies some 624,000 square centimetres. The equivalent on microfilm needs less than 2,000. An equally serious problem is that of deterioration. An unbound newspaper, say an Arabic paper from 1900 parcelled for many years, is likely on opening to be little more than fragments, or the print on the fold-lines becomes illegible. In my library newspapers are happily thrown away once it is known that there is a microfilm version in any other library in Britain. The difficulties of storage and preservation have led some libraries to place current newspapers in reading rooms for a week or two and then to dispose of them whether a microfilm exists or not. The Library of Congress, the Center for Research Libraries in Chicago and other organizations are, however, now able to supply from stock a large number of newspapers on microfilm.

The development of new kinds of studies and courses in universities and institutes has led to a demand for new types of materials which most libraries are ill-equipped or reluctant to handle. Area studies, social history, development economics, urban studies—all can demand a vast documentation which, often unavailable through normal trade channels, consists of government material, statistics, planning reports, budgets, censuses—the list is endless. To find such materials a student has either to visit a number of scattered libraries or the area of his interest itself, where he may spend many possibly fruitless hours trying to gain access to archives and documentation. There are at least two solutions to this problem. One is to establish specialized centres such as the Middle East Documentation Centres at Durham and Hamburg which take a specific effort to collect rare material, the so-called "grey" literature. Such material can then easily be supplied to others in microform either as a regular service or on demand. Or a publisher with initiative and with the aid of specialists can comb the libraries of the world and put together on microfiches a package of linked documentation.

The cost advantage of microform is clear. Even if long runs of periodicals, newspapers, or statistical material are available in print they are now too expensive for most libraries. The case for individual volumes is less clear although the boom in reprints must now be over. In the Middle Eastern field, at least, most worthy works have been reprinted and many offered today are expensive and of little value. Several publishers have been misled into producing reprints for which there never was any market, and the days when a large number of libraries were building basic collections have gone.

While the advantages of microform are obvious to a librarian, there seem to be resistance to it from users of the user. To microfiche or film material, and while these are cheaper and portable they are difficult to use in train or plane and difficult in bed. In the library or study the most efficient machines can cause aches and strain. Nor is a grey plastic case of microfiches ever likely to adorn the coffee table or to be the centre of conversation and it is difficult to imagine that the anticipation and thrill of handling and reading a new book are ever to be equalled by the process of threading a microfilm onto a reel. If microform provides a solution for the types of material mentioned above it is not really a satisfactory substitute for the printed book. Other solutions must be tried first, typescript reproduced by offset lithography or the Xeroxing and binding of a master microfilm. No young author would wish to see his thesis or first book available only in microfiche.

In addition the potential market has to be considered. Few individuals are likely to purchase readers for their own use and buyers of microforms are mainly institutional. The market is therefore restricted, and publishers will be attracted to the larger projects where cheapness can be the decisive factor. The sales channels are also restricted as bookshops do not usually handle microforms. Publishers prefer to gain subscribers to large projects by mail and have to rely on advertising for sales. It is usually not feasible to send entire projects for review and they will not be available in bookshops for browsing.

There has been some debate over the relative merits of microfiche and microfilm. A 9 × 12 cm fiche can hold well over sixty pages of a normal-sized document. The fiche is placed in the reader and any one page can be isolated. The headings of the fiches are legible to the naked eye and thus the date of a newspaper or periodical, or page of a book, can easily be found. 35mm microfilm is less convenient in that the whole film may have to be run through to find the place required, but some publishers prefer microfilm, especially for newspaper runs. The larger size of the 35mm film can provide better definition of newspaper print. Microfiche readers tend to be more compact than those for film but both types can provide printout or projection facilities.

A number of companies are at present engaged in various microform projects. The possibilities are endless. There are schemes which offer the complete resources of one library on microfiche. The Documentation Centre of Durham University has built up a unique collection of Middle Eastern primary documentation which can only be collected by specialists, quite often only in the area itself. Personal contacts can result in material being sent from the Middle East but such contacts have to be renewed at regular intervals. At Durham under vigorous direction the flow of material has been well organized and some 6,000 documents arrive per year. These are continuously filmed by University Microfilms and various packages are offered to subscribers—the complete project, subject packages (economic, political and statistical), regional (North Africa, Central Arab region, Levant) or individual documents. An essential feature of this system is the provision of a hard-copy subject-index with each package. The whole scheme offers a service to academic, business and other users who require up-to-date information on the Middle East. It is expensive but unique.

A more strictly academic service is provided by the Inter Documentation Company. Based on the premise that the contemporary economic situation in the Middle East cannot be understood without considerable historical knowledge, the attempt has been made to gather together on microfiches, economic documents from several different locations. Specialists in different regions have drawn up lists of recommended material which has been photographed and is offered either as a comprehensive package or as individual items. This kind of material can be of use both to libraries in the West and in the Third World itself where even the older institutions are unlikely to possess complete collections.

There is a boom at present in filming archives and private papers of all types. There seems to be no limit to the size or length of the project. The following have been announced or undertaken: Central Zionist Archives, Public Record Office archives on the slave trade in Africa, Indonesian records, correspondence with Russia 1781-1945 in the PRO, Persian Gulf records, missionary archives, correspondence with Japan etc. Projects are advertised which are to last five years or more. Archives in microform are valuable only if they are complete, as few scholars will willingly rely on the selections of others; and even if they did so initially would eventually be compelled to work in the archives themselves. One sometimes has the feeling that publishers, sensing the fashion in archive filming, are rather desperately searching around for bigger and better projects in the effort to outbid competitors. It cannot be denied that these programmes are useful, but nothing is a substitute for the documents themselves or the experience of working in the Quai d'Orsay, or in Venice, or in the Ottoman archives—with the excitement, the tedium, the dust and the heat and the feel of the period.

There is also a move towards filming the private papers of politicians and others which raises rather more thorny problems. Often such papers have been given into the safe keeping of libraries and archives, papers precious to the donors, sometimes rather intimate, and it is not at all certain that they would wish them to be made public indiscriminately to all. Publishers sell to all; librarians can control access to the material in their custody.

Inter Documentation has announced another type of project, the filming of all available material on a specific subject—in this case Judaica—very widely interpreted. The material will include the history of the Jews in Europe, Russia and the Middle East, archive finding aids, works on archaeology, philosophy and religion, language and literature, government publications and newspapers. The breadth of material is astonishing and one may wonder what larger projects there can be in store—photographing the contents of the Library of Congress, of the Public Record Office, of all books in English . . ?

More homely and perhaps of greater use to more libraries is the photographing of long back-runs of newspapers and other periodical material together with an annual updating. Many newspapers are now regularly available in Britain and elsewhere, from obscure titles to *The Times* and *Le Monde*. Some newspapers are undertaking their own filming. The leading Egyptian daily, *Al-Ahram*, has begun from its first year in 1877 but unfortunately at a price of some £200 per year is unlikely to find many purchasers. As useful are, for example, the microfilms of the BBC *Summary of World Broadcasts* from 1939 to 1974, and the microfiches from 1972 onwards. Hundreds of journals are now on film, ranging from the *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society* to the *Jahrbücher der Insektenkunde*.

The uses of microform appear infinite. Library catalogues have been filmed, as have medical records, the complete plans of the Russian-built steel factory in Helwan near Cairo, Gas Board accounts—all kinds of record are possible and, together with the computerization of indexes can provide efficient miniaturization and storage. But microforms are destined to be counted among those innovations which are practical rather than aesthetic. They are useful, but they do not beautify our lives.

The records of the Court of Arches

By E. G. W. Bill and J. E. Commander

The records of the Court of Arches have had a distressingly eventful history. With a few exceptions, the medieval records, which were stored in old St Paul's, perished in the Great Fire of London in 1666. Shortly after the Restoration the practice began of keeping recent records in Doctors' Commons, the stronghold of ecclesiastical lawyers, where they remained until the dissolution of the society in 1857. There followed an odyssey of tribulation. *In his evidence* to the Royal Commission on the Public Records in 1914, Sir Lewis Dibdin, who was then Dean of the Arches, referred to a strong and, so it would seem, only too accurate tradition that they had been left as rubbish in a well in St Paul's churchyard. In 1865 they were removed to Lambeth Palace, where the court then occasionally met; and when Dibdin first encountered them nearly forty years later he noted that "you almost needed a spade to dig the papers out of the dirt in which they were buried". At the outbreak of the Second World War *they went* on their travels again, this time to the Bodleian Library—there they remained until 1954, when they were deposited in Lambeth Palace Library. By this time damp, dirt, degeneration and disease, the four horsemen of the archival apocalypse, had affected the records to such an extent that a very substantial part of them was in danger. Their ultimate preservation has at last been ensured by an international rescue operation, organized by Lambeth Palace Library, the Center for Research Libraries in Chicago and the Mansell publishing company, designed *to transfer them* to microfiche.

The Court of Arches derives its name from its ancient practice of meeting in the crypt of Bow Church (S Maria de Arcubus). An ecclesiastical court of appeal for the Province of Canterbury dating *from the twelfth century*, if not earlier, it still sits from time to time. In its heyday it stood at the centre of a complex web of local church courts—consistory courts, commissary courts, archdeacons' courts, and courts of the numerous special or peculiar jurisdictions—distributed throughout the southern half of England and the whole of Wales. Until its jurisdiction was curtailed by the Probate Act of 1857 and the Public Worship Regulation Act of 1873 (one of the effects of which was to confer on the records of cases heard under these Acts the status of public records not previously enjoyed by similar litigation in the church courts), the business of the Court of Arches ranged widely over human activities.

Many disputes concerned the probate of wills. Executors, for example, sought to show that the estate of the deceased was insufficient to pay the bequests named, and details may then have been given of the state of the testator's trade or other income, and the nature of his household arrangements. There is here a wealth of data of the greatest interest to the social historian and for which it is hard to think of a better, larger or more consistent single source. When the testator was a person of importance such details have added interest, as in the suit brought by Archbishop Sancroft in 1679 against the executor of his predecessor Gilbert Sheldon about books bequeathed to Lambeth Palace Library.

Matrimonial cases were perhaps the most common of all to appear in the Court of Arches, for, apart from the high court of Parliament itself, the church courts alone were competent to annul marriages. Every sort of vice and misfortune is chronicled in the innumerable cases brought to establish a marriage contract, to declare the nullity of a marriage, for the restitution of conjugal rights, for separation on the grounds of cruelty or adultery, or for jactitation (pretence) of marriage. The cases were brought by persons from *all walks* of life, and although the evidence was often of a scandalous nature there is a great deal of factual information which reveals something of the shifting and generally not explicitly stated attitudes and mores of the times.

Other classes of litigation are a valuable source for economic and topographical history. Disputes about the non-payment of tithes, for example, usually mention details of land ownership, cultivation, tithing customs, and on occasion the effect of the introduction of new crops such as turnips and potatoes. Sometimes the evidence produced reached back to the sixteenth century. A similar kind of evidence was produced in suits to enforce the payment of rates for the repair of churches. In one such case a Northamptonshire parson produced a medieval cartulary, still to be *found in the records of the* court, in order to establish his case.

Cases concerning claims for dilapidations of rectories, vicarages, and even bishoprics found their way to the Court of Arches. The witnesses, instead of being the *neighbours, servants*, or tenants of the parties, were often local craftsmen—masons, carpenters, tilers, and glaziers. In 1683 the Bishop of Lichfield sued his predecessor John Hackett's estate because he had not rebuilt the Bishop's Palace after the destruction caused by the Civil War, although he had spent large sums on rebuilding the cathedral. The evidence included much information about the revenues of the see and the damage sustained by the cathedral and by Eccleshall castle.

The correction of the manners and morals of the clergy and laity was long considered a matter for the church courts. In 1707 the Reverend David Williams, Vicar of Llanfihangel• Cwmdu in Brecknockshire, was presented for misdemeanours which included "suffering a cheese to be put in the font of the church which is putrified and a nuisance to parishioners who come to hear divine service". An incumbent in Devon was accused of practising medicine and using an unlicensed alehouse as his surgery "where he did use much tyme in delivering out medicines". It is not difficult to detect signs of the upheaval in the Church of England caused by the Civil War in the case of the Vicar of Aldermaston who was accused in 1666 of desecrating church ornaments and utensils by turning them to domestic purposes, hunting, scattering tobacco pipes about the churchyard, and playing games on Sundays, but the height of his offence was that "he boasted a friendship with Oliver Cromwell".

Other cases concerned such parish matters as non-attendance at church, quarrels about pews or the election of churchwardens, brawling in church, and, to a surprising degree, slander—which seems to have been the carefully cultivated pastime of a large segment of the population. Disputes about faculties are of particular interest for the information they provide about the arrangement of pews, monuments, and church furniture. In short, the *records of the Court of Arches* are a primary source of great value for the social, economic, artistic, architectural, legal, ecclesiastical, topographical, and genealogical history of half the United Kingdom for over 200 years. They are a principal source for the history of marriage, for the development of ecclesiastical law after the Reformation, and for the history of the Church of England during the troubled years after the Restoration.

Despite its manifest importance this vast mass of historical material has remained almost untouched by historians. Two stubborn obstacles have stood in the way. The first of these was the absence of *any guide* to the contents of the *records*. In 1972 this hurdle was removed with the publication by the British Record Society of an *Index of cases in the records of the Court of Arches at Lambeth Palace Library, 1660-1913, edited by* J. Houston. In it the cases are listed alphabetically and the date, subject of litigation, court of first instance, and precise references to the records relating to each case are stated. So far as is known there is no similar published index to the records of any other court of law, and one of the great impediments in the way of access to the records hidden away in legal archives has been removed so far as the Court of Arches is concerned.

The second obstacle—which has in fact been made worse by the publication of the index—has proved more intractable. It consists in the widespread damage by damp and neglect which has devastated a substantial part of the archive. Although the writing has not so far been seriously affected, the major part of the records is now so fragile that it cannot be handled without the risk of accelerating its deterioration and causing further irreparable damage. It was decided that the physical repair of all the documents, although technically possible, was no solution because of the immense cost and because of the length of time required to complete the process, during which the records would for the most part continue to be unavailable. The archive was thus divided into three groups, and the principle adopted for allocating the records to these groups was the frequency with which they were likely to be required. The manner in which they had been kept up to the year 1800 made such a division feasible, since before that date the records of each case were not kept together but in series corresponding to the stages of litigation. In the first group, which consisted of documents for complete repair, were placed the Act books, Munument books and other categories which contained material concerning numerous cases, for the chance that any one of these might be needed by scholars was high. In the second group were placed records relating to a single case, and these were deemed suitable for filming. In the third category were records likely to be seldom required, such as accounts for proctors' fees, and these were to be left until funds could be found either to repair or film them.

With the aid of the Pilgrim Trust, the Bernard Sunley Foundation, the Marc Fitch Fund, and the Corporation of the City of London, work commenced on the repair of the records in the first group. Many of these records have proved very suitable for repair by the liquid pulp casting method recently introduced into this country by the firm of Denis Blunn and Co, and steady progress is being made. But it is with the records in the second category—namely, those to be placed on microfiche—that this account is chiefly concerned.

For many years it has been the practice of libraries to put historical records on film, usually for the sake of disseminating information. The principal object of the scheme now being undertaken at Lambeth is, however, preservation rather than dissemination; though dissemination, which is a desirable object in itself, will ensue as a consequence. It is intended that the records shall be made available in Lambeth Palace Library only on film, and that the originals, because of their great fragility, shall be stored permanently in the library but not produced for scholars. Thus the microfiche forms not only an integral and fundamental part of the programme of record preservation but will become the *primary source of practical consultation*. Usually scholars who are in a position to visit the holding library prefer to study the originals rather than photographs. So far as the Court of Arches is concerned, however, the film will have the same importance for (and should be equally accessible to) scholars in London or Louisiana, since the originals will not be available for study at Lambeth Palace.

The records immediately involved are the Process Books of the court, though it is intended that other categories of records should *eventually* be added. The Process Books number over 2,300 volumes containing a total of about 800,000 pages of writing and representing over half the entire archive. They survive for about a quarter of the cases heard in the Court of Arches and contain transcripts of the evidence, usually in *English and invariably so after* 1733, given in the lower courts before coming on appeal to the Court of Arches.

They are thus complete in themselves and contain perhaps the greater part of the historical material in the records. Often they are *the only surviving records* of the cases, and even where the files of the original courts still exist the advantage of having so many centralized in one source and covering such a wide area of the country and such a long period of time is immense.

The filming of records on this scale is a very costly business. Valuable assistance has been given by the British Academy and by the British Library to enable the originals to receive the minimum amount of repair necessary to enable them to be photographed. The very much larger cost of transferring the material to microfiche is being met by the international cooperation of university and national libraries in the United States and Australia under the aegis of the Center for Research Libraries in Chicago. The participating libraries will have access to a copy of the complete microfiche which will be held by the Center, and they may purchase their own copy, at an advantageous price, should they wish to do so.

The considerable technical difficulty of filming the records has been most satisfactorily overcome by Mansell, who are issuing the film to subscribers over a period of six years (this started in 1975). A valuable feature deriving from the cooperative basis of the scheme of publication is that funds from additional subscriptions will be fed back into the project. The hope is that this will help to stem the ever-rising *costs that tend* to militate against any project of this size and duration.

Full particulars of the project are available from the publishers (Mansell, 3 Bloomsbury Place, London, WC1) or from the Center for Research Libraries, 5721 Cottage Grove Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60637.

Jewish studies: a major rescue operation

By David Patterson

Writing in *The Times Higher Education Supplement* of February 20, 1976, John Holloway of Cambridge gloomily predicts the demise of English studies in this country because of shrinking resources and rising costs. "Perhaps the worst problem", he explains, "is about books. On a very rough estimate, academic books are at present annually increasing in price not far short of ten times as fast as student grants or our academic salaries. Within a few years, departments may be teaching major texts (I mean Wordsworth, Dickens, Conrad, Lawrence . . .) to large student bodies not one of whom can afford the book."

But there is worse to come. "Never buy criticism or sell a text", Professor Holloway warns us. "Never throw away lecture notes . . . in 10 or 20 years, when students have almost no scholarly books to read, they will begin to want 'information' once again, but by then you yourself may find you cannot re-write lectures prepared long ago out of library copies because they have fallen apart and not been replaced."

So much for English studies. In many branches of Hebrew and Jewish studies an even graver situation has existed for more than thirty years. Shortly after my first university appointment in 1953 I delivered a series of lectures on the growth of modern Hebrew literature from the French Revolution to the First World War. The realization soon dawned that I was talking about books which my students could not merely not obtain, but which they were unlikely ever to see at all. Works by Hebrew authors corresponding to Wordsworth, Dickens, Conrad, Lawrence (I refer not to literary merit but to their relative importance in the history of Hebrew literature), often existed only in a handful of copies throughout the world. This was the case not only in the realms of poetry and fiction. It applied equally to the whole range of periodical literature, which plays a central role in the development of modern Hebrew literature.

Published originally in small editions for a scattered readership, the natural wastage of this material was made more severe by migrations, the ravages of the First World War and the Russian Revolution, and the wholesale destruction of Jews and of all things Jewish by the Nazis during the Second World War. By 1945 many of the "classics" of modern Hebrew literature were virtually unavailable even to scholars working in the field.

In many instances, moreover, and particularly in the case of newspapers and periodicals, rarity is matched only by fragility. Printed on paper which is rapidly crumbling, many works of prime importance are in real danger of physical disintegration. So much so, that many librarians are loath to subject the works to normal usage, which would only accelerate the process of fragmentation. Elsewhere resort is made to draconian methods. In the New York Public Library on 42nd Street, for example, the twelve volumes of *Ha-Shachar*, one of the most important Hebrew journals of the nineteenth century and very [illegible] with [illegible] played a [illegible] Even once locked [illegible] the volumes prove uncomfortable to read.

The real dimension of the dangers threatening nineteenth-century Hebrew literature passed largely unnoticed for many years because the main body of students interested in the field was concentrated at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where a very wide range of the books and periodicals under consideration were housed in the reading rooms of the library on open shelves. As a result, few students were conscious of the extreme rarity of much of the material so easily accessible to them, and were surprised, and often aggrieved, to find that a large part of it was virtually unobtainable elsewhere.

The only factor dominating nineteenth-century Hebrew literature [illegible] equally [illegible] other branches of Jewish studies which are seriously hampered for lack of available texts. For more than a decade sporadic attempts have been made to reprint important works, frequently by photo-offset, for the benefit of the growing number of individual scholars and university departments concerned with Jewish studies. But in spite of valiant efforts, the high cost of reprints and a severe curtailment of library funds have combined to limit the effectiveness of all such ventures. However praiseworthy, reprint projects have touched only the fringe of the problem.

Following so many years of grave concern over this increasingly urgent problem, and involvement in a number of abortive attempts to solve it, I was surprised and delighted when Henri de Mink of the Inter Documentation Company approached me a little over a year ago with the suggestion of a Jewish Studies Microfiche Project which would make some 10,000 volumes available on microfiche. Although long disenchanted with the use of microfilm, in which medium I had over the years reluctantly read thousands of pages of Hebrew text, I became an immediate convert to the use of microfiche. The technique enables more than a hundred pages of text to occupy a fiche no larger than a postcard. The fiche is merely dropped into the slot of a reading machine (which is small, light and portable) and the pages can be projected on to a desk or a wall in easily readable form. Thus the cumbersome, time-consuming process involved in using microfilms, especially when different works on different microfilms have to be compared, is obviated. Storage requires less than one tenth of the space necessary for an equivalent number of books, while the price is considerably less than one half the cost of a printed book. Moreover, the modest number of copies which must be sold to make a work in microfiche financially viable permits the reproduction of a wide range of important books which could otherwise most republishing costs.

The editing of the Jewish Studies Microfiche Project has been undertaken by members of the faculty of the Oxford Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies, together with a distinguished international panel of contributors. Recourse has been made to the rich collections of Judaic materials in the National and University Library of Jerusalem, the Rosenthalia collection in Amsterdam, the YIVO Library in New York, the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and many others. The work is already well advanced, and the entire project is scheduled for completion within three years.

The plan embraces ten principal sections, in each of which lists of rare and important works have been submitted by experts in the various fields. Section 1 consists of carefully selected works of bibliography. Section 2 is devoted to Jewish history under twelve subheadings: Eastern Europe, France, Germany, Islamic countries, Italy, the Netherlands, Palestine sixteenth-nineteenth centuries, Palestine twentieth century and Israel, Russia and the Soviet Union, Spain and Portugal, antisemitism and the history of Zionism. It is hoped to augment this section with lists devoted to Anglo-Jewish and American-Jewish history.

Section 3 is concerned with philosophy and religion under five headings: Bible research, postbiblical and Talmudic research, medieval philosophy, Kabbalah and Hasidism. Section 4 comprises languages and literature in three divisions: Semitic linguistics and comparative grammar, Hebrew literature both medieval and modern, and Yiddish language and literature. The latter includes a plan to make available a complete corpus of all Yiddish printed books up to 1650. Section 5 is devoted to archaeology, including selected rare serials and monographs, while Section 6 embraces music, musicology and the arts. Section 7 is devoted to archive materials, including state archives, central Zionist archives and the archives of Yad Vashem devoted to the holocaust. Section 8 deals with the social and political sciences, including Israel government publications and the Jewish labour movement. Section 9 is concerned with periodicals and newspapers in Hebrew, Yiddish and other languages. An attempt is being made to compile as comprehensive a list as possible of rare periodicals, of which only scattered collections exist at present. Finally, Section 10 embraces collected papers, jubilee and memorial volumes. It is hoped that further sections will be added in due course.

In making such a range of material available for libraries and individual scholars and students, the Inter Documentation Company and the Oxford Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies hope that it will be possible to breathe fresh life into many branches of Jewish learning and rescue it from an even greater threat than that so sadly predicted for English studies.

Projects and prospects

By Peter A. Thomas

Virtually every academic discipline is covered by micropublishing; but historians are probably served best of all. For the medievalist, World Microfilms Publications, London, have issued on 35mm roll film some of the outstanding manuscripts to be found in the Lambeth Palace Library. The library is extremely rich in English manuscripts of the ninth to sixteenth centuries; these were assembled from monastery libraries, about fifty years after Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries. Many of the manuscripts are beautifully illuminated and some, including *The MacDurnum Gospels*, *The Lambeth Apocalypse* and *Saint Albar's Chronicle*, are reproduced on colour microfilm.

Manuscripts of a later period have been microfilmed by EP Microform of East Ardsley in West Yorkshire. Among many interesting collections this publisher offers the *Manuscript Material from the Library and Offices of the Earl of Leicester at Holkham Hall*. The account books of the first Earl of Leicester—better known as Coke of Norfolk—have been microfilmed, as also have the papers of his ancestor Chief Justice Edward Coke, who prosecuted both Sir Walter Raleigh and Guy Fawkes. Also from EP Microform comes British Records Relating to America, published in conjunction with the British Association for American Studies.

In the days when printing and paper were much cheaper many historical documents were published by conventional methods. County record societies, for example, have been making local materials available for many years, but often the older volumes are out of print and fetch high prices on the secondhand market. Local historians, both amateur and professional, will be glad to note that Chadwyck-Healey of Cambridge have republished the collections of several record societies on microfiche. The oldest records so far available are those of the Chetham Society, which in 1844 published *Travels in Holland, the United Provinces, England, Scotland, and Ireland, 1634-1635*, by Sir William Brereton. All the microfiche in this series may be purchased separately or as sets. Chadwyck-Healey have also published, on 35mm roll film, Reports from Committees of the House of Commons 1715-1801. These reports cover a wide range of subjects and provide an important source of information on the activities of the East India Company. Although printed, the reports were never published in the journals of the house, and this microform reissue is the first since their original publication between 1803 and 1806.

Historians of the twentieth century will find much of value in the microform list of the Harvester Press. One of their microfiche projects covers the major part of the national archives of the British Labour Party at Transport House. Already available are many of the National Executive Committee Minutes of the British Labour Party. Parallel with this series are the Archives of the British Trades Union Congress, the Archives of the British Conservative Party, and the Archives of the British Liberal Party.

Harvester have also chosen microfiche as the medium for their Primary Social Sources series. In preparing the series, the output of pressure groups and social movements is acquired, catalogued, indexed and microfilmed. The literature of women's liberation and "gay" rights has been collected and microfiche published as *Sexual Politics in Britain*. Besides such obvious inclusions as *Women's Voice*, *Spare Rib*, and *Gay News*, this microfiche collection also makes readily available to the social historian such publications as *Enough*, the journal of the Bristol Women's Liberation Group, and *Sappho*, a homosexual magazine for women. Also available on microfiche is *Private Eye*, part of Harvester's collection entitled *The Underground and Alternative Press in Britain*, which also includes such unfamiliar titles as *China Cat Sunflower*, *Dwarf News*, and *Titus Groan*.

Sigillography, or the study of historic seals, is another area which provides opportunities for micropublishing. Last year Oxford Microform Publications published *A Catalogue of Seals in the University of Glasgow*, using the microfiche-book format. An introductory text and a series of envelopes for holding microfiche are bound together into a handy-size booklet. The cost of printing a specialist book of this kind by conventional means would have been prohibitive because of the many photographic illustrations.

Besides developing microfiche-books, some of which can contain up to sixty microfiche and forty printed pages, Oxford Microform Publications are rapidly building up a list of out-of-print books. Among the titles of interest to the historian are Barraclough's *Factors in German History*, Frewer's *Bibliography of Historical Writings 1940-1945*, and Galivio's *The King's Government and the Common Law*. Oxford University Press are also offering microfiche editions of selected out-of-print books from its backlist, including sixty titles of historical studies. Some of these books, such as Gopal's *The Viceroyalty of Lord Irwin*, have only been out of print for a year or so, while others, like Kingsford's *Prejudice and Promise in Fifteenth Century England*, have not been available for more than thirty years.

Also in the Oxford microfiche list are about fifty out-of-print works of literary criticism. Micropublishing also serves the literary scholar by making readily available authors' original manuscripts on film. EP Microform, for example, have produced on eighteen reels of 35mm microfilm *The Original Manuscripts and Papers of Thomas Hardy*, including most of the manuscripts held by the Dorset County Museum and further manuscripts held in the British Museum and other collections. Publishers have of course had an important role to play in the development of literature and their archives make fascinating reading. The changing taste of the Victorian reading public can be gauged by studying the *Archives of George Routledge and Company 1853-1902*, available from Chadwyck-Healey. This collection is in The Archives of British Publishers on Microfilm series. For those wishing to study the earlier developments of language and literature the Scolar Press have republished the 365 titles in their English linguistics 1500-1800 series as a set of microfiche.

Micropublishing offers the possibility of reproducing illustrations with ease, compared with conventional printing. A valuable collection of art exhibition catalogues is being published on microfiche by Chadwyck-Healey. Intended to cover every aspect of art, the series will contain out-of-print publications of museums and art galleries throughout the world. Many are already available, including 200 exhibition catalogues from the Victoria and Albert Museum, one of the earliest being that of the Caxton Celebration of 1877. An important series of illustrated volumes on traditional architecture and design were published by Batsford between 1900 and 1945. These, including Ashby's *Modern English Silverwork*, Braun's *The English Castle* and Whistler's *The Imagination of Vanbrugh*, have been reprinted as microfiche by the Architectural Press.

Tudor typographer

By D. J. McKitterick

C. L. OASTLER:
John Day
The Elizabethan Printer
87pp. Oxford Bibliographical Society. £2.

A. F. ALLISON:
Robert Greene, 1558-1592
A bibliographical catalogue of the early editions in English
75pp and 2 microfiches. Dawson. £9.

C. L. Oastler's thesis on John Day, the only recent extended study of the principal English printer in the sixteenth century, has been available in the Bodleian Library for some years, and in publishing it for a wider audience, albeit unrevised in the light of the past ten years' research, the Oxford Bibliographical Society has performed a welcome service.

In the limited time available to him Mr Oastler concentrated his attention on those aspects of Day's career which may be less familiar to bibliographers than they should be. He traces the life of the "English Plantin" from his probable birthplace, Dunwich, through the difficult period under Mary when he was briefly imprisoned in the Tower and may or may not have been forced to flee abroad (Mr Oastler is sceptical whether he actually printed there), to his return and his subsequent rise to prosperity and fame under Elizabeth, his unhappy quarrel with his son Richard and his death on his way into Suffolk in 1584. Plomer was the last biographer of Day to explore the archives of the City of London, and Mr Oastler in supplementing this with information culled from archives elsewhere presents the most that we are likely to find out about his life.

Understandably under the circumstances, and presumably partly because the draft revised *Short Title Catalogue* was not then available to him, Mr Oastler has little new to add numerically to the corpus of titles printed by Day. This work will remain to be done in detail even after the publication of the new *STC*, but meanwhile he has included, in a chapter which owes much to Harry Carter and H. D. L. Vervliet, a concise summary which though still far from complete gathers together information formerly scattered. Day acquired most of his type from the Continent, and Mr Oastler questions whether even the Anglo-Saxon type procured by him to print Aelfric's *Testimonia of antiquitie* was cut in London: too little is yet known about the punch-cutters in London at the period, among them Gabriel Guyot and Pierre Picard, to decide whether they originated in London or the Continent. The black-letter faces used by Day do not figure in Mr Oastler's survey. He admits the difficulties of identifying them, which are considerable, and although we may be sorry not to have a more detailed investigation into the types used by Day during Mary's reign the investigation will be a complicated one—if indeed it can be completed satisfactorily. Less pardonable, however, is the poor reproduction of many of the types and ornaments, which appear to have been reproduced on an imperfect photocopier.

Day is remembered now chiefly as the printer employed by Parker [illegible] in print [illegible] Church Settlement, the printer of *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*; unless the producer of a series of magnificent Antiphonale books at the instigation of John Dee. Mr Oastler describes and goes some way towards explaining how they were financed. He also discusses what must have been Day's most successful money-spinner, the *ABC with the Catechism* and the *Psalms in Metre*. On Day's other everyday work he is less detailed. "It is hard", he writes, "to reconcile Day, the religious printer, with Day, the printer of such elegant works as the *Cosmographicall Glasse*." Hard indeed, but was this dual standard simply the result of accepting that the English market only demanded careful printing under special circumstances, such as on work undertaken for Parker, or to present models of style, like the translation in the best French style? The answer must be a more complex one than has hitherto been assumed, but it is only one of the questions prompted by Day's career. With Mr Oastler's book we shall be in a better position to debate them.

The bibliography of Robert Greene is not always easy to follow, and in the past forty years there has appeared a steady dribble of contributions designed to correct or expand the list contained in the *STC* of 1926. Ghosts have been laid and the hasty work of printer and bookseller explained. A. F. Allison has also been in touch with the late William A. Jackson's and K. F. Pantzer's work on the new *STC*, and the story is at last clearer. Many of Greene's pamphlets are now extremely rare, and in thirty-five instances out of 110 entries Mr Allison records only one copy. In another twenty-five cases only two are recorded: the 1605 edition of *Menaphon*, for example, now survives only in Wrocław University and in a curiously imperfect copy in Trinity College, Cambridge. The survival of so few copies makes the bibliographer's task easier in that he can examine or list only a strictly limited number of books, but one cannot help wondering what editions or titles have been lost.

In his approach Mr Allison has followed Greg's *Bibliography of the English Printed Drama*, with some minor alterations; many of the books of course appear in Greg and the chief departure in this new survey is to give a short title only, rather than a full transcription, which is unnecessary when (as here) nearly all the title-pages are reproduced. His descriptions are generally briefer than Greg's and his details of head and tail-pieces, type ornaments, and decorative initials are less informative than one might hope: there is not much point in being told that one is present on a page if no further details are given—the letter of the alphabet, the size of the factotum ornament, whether the ornament is representational. Mr Allison speaks also of "lace ornament" but the purist might prefer the (admittedly longwinded) phrase, "double band of fleurons within single rules", to take one example, rather than the less specific term. More generally, the bibliography's usefulness could have been enhanced if Mr Allison had included notes on photo-facsimiles published during the past few years, whether full-size or on microfilm. This is not, perhaps, the traditional purpose of a descriptive bibliography, but most students of Greene cannot have access to the originals and must rely on facsimiles.

This is the first Pall Mall bibliography (but by no means the first bibliographical reference book) not to reproduce title-pages close to their original size: instead there are 103 illustrations on two microfiches at the end, which are obviously less convenient to use than conventional reproductions. The book is not cheap, and the other three books in the series are currently available at £3 less each. Presumably much of the cost is in type-setting; one hesitates to guess what the price would have been had the illustrations been printed full-size. Surely it would also be more correct to say instead of "no fiche", where a title-page is not reproduced, "no illustration"? There are two microfiches, or colloquially two fiches, not 103.

Such minor criticisms cannot, however, detract from Mr Allison's great service to everyone working on English late sixteenth and early seventeenth-century literature, in this and his other bibliographies in the same series, Tudor Grub-Street, whose reputation has sometimes resembled myth rather than reality, presents one of the more attractive byways of literary history. Mr Allison is proving a patient and informative guide to it.

Tomtopia

By Clive Probyn

HENRY FIELDING:
The History of Tom Jones
2 Volumes
Introduction and Commentary by Martin C. Battestin
Textual Editor Fredson Bowers
1,080pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press. £20.

The Wesleyan edition of Fielding's works is published jointly by Clarendon Press, Oxford, and Wesleyan University Press, Connecticut, an international partnership which does for Fielding studies what Anglo-French cooperation did for Concorde. *Joseph Andrews*, the *Miscellanies*, and *The Jacobite's Journal* have already appeared in what is, editorially speaking, the big league, requiring large finances, definitive textual engineering, a large purchase price and, in the case of *Tom Jones*, a time scheme stretching back more than ten years. Fortunately, the theft of an early version of the commentary in 1967, from the editor's car in Washington DC, was not followed by a pirated edition—unlike Concordski and many a best-selling eighteenth-century book. Put simply, this is a model of authoritative scholarship and applied bibliography. [illegible] would expect from the leading Fielding critic and the doyen of American bibliography. As Professor Bowers puts it, modestly in a footnote, this is the first edition to appear

> that by a bibliographical and linguistic study of the relationship of the texts to authority attempts to segregate the authoritative fourth-edition substantive revisions and to weed out the various errors in this important edition while at the same time presenting Fielding's purified substantive final text within the framework of the more authoritative first-edition accidentals.

The nature of this dual-authored edition was surely dictated by the kind of novel Fielding produced, the "mirror of the Georgian England". It was shaped by a fusion of Hunter's valued "personal experience gained in the public world, and his sense of literary forms. The comedy of form and ideas is morally emblematic, a reiteration of the original act of creation, as well as a typological essay on eighteenth-century life and people. Allworthy and his country seat are *exempla*, heightened imaginative syntheses of Fielding's own birthplace, of Lyttelton and Hagley, of Ralph Allen and Prior Park. Private values are celebrated as public achievements, the actual is elevated into the realm of moral pattern. Thus Professor Battestin's commentary has to do two things: fix the specific "facts" of the novel in the 1740s, and also flesh out its broadly philosophical places in the tradition of Christian humanism. These tasks are accomplished with economy and grace, and more fully in the same author's *The Providence of Wit* (1974).

Textually, there are important revisions to our previous assumptions, and it is obvious that previous editions are now easily and finally superseded: one thinks of the Random House edition of 1950, which misread Fielding's key term "conservation of character" in Book VIII i, or the Penguin edition of 1966 which reproduced the fourth edition text. But, sensibly, all critical notes are placed where they are most immediately useful: on the page. All the bibliographical apparatus is unobtrusively tucked away in appendixes. Here surely is an arrangement which aids fluid and informed enjoyment of the novel as a sequential argument and also provides a—literally—concluding proof that what the reader has experienced is as close as we are ever likely to get to Fielding's original intention. An added reward for completing these large volumes is the selection of views and a map, a necessary reminder of the catholicity of Fielding's literary imagination. Indeed, what emerges most strongly from this edition is the triumphal form of the novel itself: a technical innovation in the shape of the novel as a public genre, combined with the flexibility demanded by Fielding's irony, cutting down pride to folly and finding exemplary behaviour to the humiliating failures of the real world. Fielding's label—comic epic in prose (*Joseph Andrews*)—seems the complicated taxonomy of ideas, forms and human types which this splendid edition so eloquently represents.

Stepping stones

By A. M. T. Moore

JAMES MELLAART:
The Neolithic of the Near East
300pp. Thames and Hudson. £6.50

The Neolithic of the Near East is a comprehensive account addressed to students of prehistory for whom as other up-to-date synthesis exists. James Mellaart takes as his theme "the cultural development of man in the Near East ... from 15000 to 5000 BC". He describes each culture in chronological order region by region, beginning with the Levant from the Upper Palaeolithic to the end of the aceramic Neolithic. He next considers the Mesolithic and earlier Neolithic of the Zagros mountains and Anatolia and gives a brief account of the Neolithic of Cyprus. The fourth chapter is devoted to the Neolithic of Mesopotamia. Then in several short chapters Mr Mellaart describes the developed Neolithic of western Iran, the Mesolithic and Neolithic of Armenia and Azerbaijan, northern Iran and Turkmenia. He returns to the Levant in Chapter 8 to discuss the later, ceramic Neolithic cultures. The geographical scope is widened in succeeding chapters to cover the development of the Neolithic in Greece, the Balkans, the Nile Valley and the Sahara. The book ends with some general remarks and a digression on prehistoric languages.

This broad geographical perspective is refreshing because it permits a comparison of the different paths of cultural advance in neighbouring regions. Mr Mellaart takes the main sites of each culture and describes in detail the buildings, artifacts, economies, burial practices and art of their inhabitants. Many of the sites have been excavated within the past decade so Mr Mellaart has prepared his account from preliminary reports and unpublished information. He has succeeded in including the results of all but the most recent fieldwork and gives an accurate account of the facts. Artifacts and building plans are illustrated by many line drawings and there are a number of maps, photographs and chronological charts. The book has a lengthy bibliography which will be particularly useful for students.

The author of a book on as large a subject as this cannot be personally familiar with all the data. This has led Mr Mellaart to restate without qualification the interpretations made by some archaeologists of their results even though those may be open to review. He also adopts the idiosyncratic terms used by archaeologists to describe cultures and chronological phases although these may be contradictory. Thus in his discussion of the Neolithic in the Levant he describes the cultures of the eighth and seventh millennia BC as "Pre-Pottery Neolithic" but goes on to characterize sixth and fifth millennia cultures by the Byblos terminology of "Early", "Middle" and "Late Neolithic". Had he used a more general descriptive scheme of his own, confusion might have been avoided.

While this book gives a good description of the artifactual remains of Neolithic societies in the Near East the use of a purely cultural approach has disadvantages. Mr Mellaart never really explains what he means by the "Hacilar", "Halaf" and "Karanovo I" cultures or any other culture he describes. These entities are discussed in terms of artifacts, pottery in particular, but we are left wondering what they may have meant in human terms. Although the economic evidence from individual sites is described, changes in economy within each region and the reasons for them are scarcely considered. The fundamental question of why agriculture, the basis of the Neolithic way of life, developed at all is never discussed. Mr Mellaart suggests that the cultural evolution he describes was accompanied by profound changes in social structure but we are not told what these were or how he thinks Neolithic society was organized. Trade in exotic raw materials is mentioned frequently but the mechanisms by which this may have operated are hardly mentioned.

In his introduction Mr Mellaart explains that he feels the "data are far too thin on the ground to warrant philosophical traces on the developments of agriculture, etc" so that "all one can hope to achieve is a compilation of the evidence, while suggesting some lines of development". Such restraint has its merits, but others would feel that the great quantity of information acquired in recent years which Mr Mellaart presents here could tell us more about man's way of life in the Neolithic than he attempts to do. He says that he is "suspicious of theoretical short cuts" yet we would learn much more about economy and society if the same data were examined from other points of view. It is only by attempting to explain rather than simply to describe the cultural record that we shall find out what was happening in the Neolithic. There never will be enough evidence to answer all our questions; but therein lies the stimulus to further research and a greater understanding of the past.

Three ages of man

By Norman Hammond

OLE KLINDT-JENSEN:
A History of Scandinavian Archaeology
160pp including 124 illustrations. Thames and Hudson. £3.95.

Archaeology is a young discipline, still formulating its own body of central theory, and still in many parts of the world in a pioneer phase. The historiography of archaeology is correspondingly recent, and only within the past quarter-century have systematic attempts been made to analyse the origins and growth of the subject in Europe, where it began. The appearance in 1959 of Sir Thomas Kendrick's *British Antiquity* and Glyn Daniel's *A Hundred Years of Archaeology* gave the intellectual history of archaeology a Britannocentric bias from which it has only recently begun to expand, with works such as G. R. Willey and J. A. Sabloff's *A History of American Archaeology*, and now from the same publisher, Ole Klindt-Jensen's succinct, intelligent and well written *A History of Scandinavian Archaeology*.

Scandinavia first appeared in taller syntheses of the field as the place where, in the early nineteenth century, Christian Jürgensen Thomsen formulated the descriptive model of successive ages of stone, bronze and iron, applied it to the material in the Copenhagen museum which he set up, and revolutionized understanding of the chronology of prehistoric Europe. Although the more cautious commentators of the 1860s were prepared to regard him as indisputable *primus inter pares* in this, it has become clear that in Italy and France the notion of the "Three Age System" was being explicitly used from the Renaissance onwards to place both European prehistoric finds and ethnographic material from the New World in a developmental framework based on Lucretius's *De rerum natura* and other classical works. This studied allusion in fact to have been [illegible] a part of a decent education. It was never explicitly [illegible] Thomsen took the implicit [illegible] to far the first time this eclectic display with [illegible] functional classification [illegible] military, domestic, funerary [illegible] and ritual groups.

Yet other potential bases for classification existed, in particular the social typology of evolution from savagery to barbarism to civilization, emerging from Enlightenment thought and expounded in Scandinavia by Sven Nilsson in 1834.

Nilsson's precursor at Lund a century earlier, Kilian Stobaeus, already recognized flint implements as "the earliest everyday tools", on the basis of the Lucretian model and ethnographic analogy, and one of the principal benefits of Professor Klindt-Jensen's book is that we can now see Thomsen, his successor J. J. A. Worsaae and Oscar Montelius, the trinity who dominated Scandinavian and sometimes European archaeology for a century from 1816 on, in the illuminating perspective of their own intellectual ancestry. Men such as Johan Bure and Ole Worm, the rival antiquaries of early seventeenth-century Sweden and Denmark respectively, find little or no mention in earlier works of archaeological historiography; yet the one had a state antiquarian office, the Riksantikvariat, established in 1630, and the other compiled the six massive volumes of *Danicorum Monumentorum*, published in 1643, achievements which place them at least on a par with William Camden, Edward Lhwyd and John Aubrey, their better-known English contemporaries.

What Professor Klindt-Jensen shows, although he does not labour the point comparing them, is that the Scandinavian antiquarian and archaeological tradition was as lively and innovative as that of Britain, and of what we know of parallel developments in France; a serious study of the predecessors and successors of Montfaucon; and the one of antiquarian interests in the Holy Roman Empire, are long overdue. It may be that a general European interest in the local past, stimulated into topographic antiquarianism by the Renaissance and then into models of social evolution by the Enlightenment, is a more likely background to the development of archaeology as a discipline than the narrower British tradition recognized by Walter Taylor nearly thirty years ago in *A Study of Archaeology* and cheerfully accepted by a generation of students since. Apart from writing a fascinating narrative, Professor Klindt-Jensen has forced us to look again, and find the picture more complex, but also more interesting and convincing, than it was before.

Enlightened entanglements

By Robert Fox

SERGIO MORAVIA :
Il Pensiero Degli Idéologues
Scienza e filosofia in Francia (1780-1815)
865pp. Florence : La Nuova Italia. L13,000.

Ever since their ideas took shape in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the *idéologues* have hovered in the wings of French intellectual life. After fleeting periods of real influence under the Girondins and the Directorate, they have never been quite forgotten, but they have only been truly visible in those rare periods, like the Third Republic, when their particular blend of *scientism* and *visionary liberalism* has been in fashion; hence it is no coincidence that the only full-length study of them to appear in French, by the positivistically inclined François Picavet, dates from 1891. For the most part, the *idéologues* have been conspicuously ignored in France, lacking as they do both the literary qualities that might have earned them a place in the canon of classic authors and the sustained political influence that would ensure their continuing prominence in French Revolutionary studies. Even the modern relativist trends in cultural history have failed to wrest them from the obscurity of the dark age with which we are all too ready to separate the Enlightenment from the age of Romanticism.

Outside France, however, the *idéologues* have been well served, and Sergio Moravia, of the University of Florence, is the latest in a line of foreign scholars who have grappled with the proliferation of Cabanis, Destutt de Tracy, Degérando, Laromiguière, and the rest. (Incidentally, I exclude Condorcet from this list because of the tenuousness of his links with *idéologie*, not for any lack of verbosity.) On the whole, the tradition, extending from van Duzer in the 1930s to Joanna Richards and Keith Baker in recent years, has been an impressive one, and it is therefore a mark of respect to place Moravia firmly among its most distinguished representatives.

Il Pensiero degli Idéologues completes the study of *idéologie* which Moravia began with the publication, in 1968, of *Il Tramonto dell'Illuminismo*. In his earlier book, concerned with the political face of *idéologie*, Moravia discussed the struggles of the *idéologues* for educational and cultural reform in the 1790s and their generally ill-starred relationships with the governments of the revolutionary and Napoleonic periods. In *Il Pensiero degli Idéologues*, by contrast, he treats the *idéologues* as philosophers and men of science, the successors of the *philosophes* of the eighteenth century; indeed, the whole thrust of his work lies in the entirely plausible thesis that, far from dying before the Revolution, a tradition of true Enlightenment thought continued, and even grew, into the first decade of the nineteenth century, when *idéologie* and the Enlightenment eventually succumbed together.

Since neither the political nor the purely intellectual perspective can be complete in itself, it is essential that the two books be read as one. Perhaps this is asking a lot of English readers; but to do otherwise would be to divorce the politics and actions of the *idéologues* from their philosophical context.

Politically and institutionally, the *idéologues* present a conveniently neat collective biography. They were predominantly sons of the lesser nobility; most of them reached maturity in the last declining years of the Ancien Régime; and, to a man, they welcomed the Revolution if its more moderate phases. Without ever quite willing it, they gradually assumed a measure of corporate identity over a period of some thirty years beginning in the 1770s. And, as they did so, *idéologie* tiftully matured as a programme for political and cultural reform that would chart a middle course between despotism and the populist excesses of Jacobinism and sustain an elite, lay culture, at once appropriate for an enlightened age and yet secure from intellectual vandalism.

Born in the Enlightenment purple of Madame Helvétius's salon at Auteuil in the 1770s, *idéologie* became steadily more public through various improving publishing ventures, such as the *Encyclopédie méthodique* and the *Décade philosophique*, and through the Société de 1789 (where Condorcet and the *idéologue* Sieyès made common cause with the supporters of constitutional monarchy, Mirabeau and La Fayette). And finally, between 1795 and 1803, it luxuriated in the most famous of its numerous institutional settings, the Second Class of the National Institute; here, in Daunou's brainchild, devoted to the moral and political sciences (with a special section for "the analysis of sensations and ideas"), it had a purpose-built home and, potentially at least, the means of power and influence.

But by the time the *idéologues* had at last been given the accolade of a title—Destutt de Tracy's *neologism idéologie* and Chateaubriand's *idéologue* both date from about 1800—their cause was all but lost. Already Napoleon was set on the emasculation of *idéologie* as a political threat, and his peevish closure of the Second Class, by 1803 a decidedly inbred nest of *idéologie*, proved to be a well-directed blow. Lacking both public office and a prominent institutional base, the *idéologues* never recovered. Cohesion was quickly lost, and henceforth such influence as they did exert, though not inconsiderable—Stendhal and Balzac, Saint-Simon and Comte, Magendie and Schopenhauer were all to attest to that—was at a personal rather than a collective level.

Politically, then, the story seems a fairly straightforward one of high-principled idealists defeated by the harsh realities of the power struggle. But, for the historian of science and philosophy, things are not so simple. For, scientifically, the *idéologues* were a notoriously elusive group, so disparate in their views that they barely constituted a school; their common ground did not extend beyond a vague allegiance to the sensationalist psychology of Condillac and to his ideal of a moral and political science that would acquire sufficient exactitude to earn a place in the philosophical pantheon then dominated by the physical sciences. The problem is aggravated for the historian of science by the fact that the common ground was not only limited but also shifting; and it is the most important single contribution of *Il Pensiero degli Idéologues* to have charted, in unprecedented detail, the tortuous path by which psychological theory in France passed from Condillac's *Traité des sensations*, with its idiosyncratic, even superfluous notion of an *âme sèche* distinct from the human body, through the rampant materialism of Cabanis and Destutt de Tracy, to the new dualism of Maine de Biran.

This remarkable transformation—a *locus classicus*, if ever there was one, for the transition from Enlightenment to Romanticism—is described in two sections, each of book length, organized around the work of Cabanis and Destutt de Tracy. It is a labyrinthine story, rich in paradox, in which covertly revisionist works—Moravia picks, interestingly, on Degérando's *Des signes* (1800) as the first manifestation of a "crisis" in *idéologue* psychology—were appearing at the very time when materialism was moving towards its apotheosis in Cabanis's expressively titled *Rapports du physique et du moral de l'homme* (1802). The complexities are beautifully unravelled, and the result is a sensitive and powerful account that catches nuances and general trends alike.

It is also a highly suggestive study. For instance, the sketch of Degérando's theory of an *activité intériorisée*, governing a realm of mental and spiritual processes that could not be reduced to the organization of brute matter, in the way that Cabanis supposed to be always possible, shows that we should be ready to divert more of the blame for the decay of *idéologie*, and hence for the stifling of the last throes of the Enlightenment, from Napoleon to the *idéologues* themselves. For, as Moravia demonstrates quite clearly, it was a perilously short step from *Des signes* to the hyperorganic, voluntaristic notions of Maine de Biran and, through him, to the spiritualism of Royer-Collard and Cousin, whose contempt for *idéologie* did so much to ensure its neglect not only among their contemporaries in the first Romantic generation, but also for most of the nineteenth century.

By the high standards of this book, the remaining two sections—on the place of *idéologie* in the development of "positive" social and economic theory from Condorcet to Jean-Baptiste Say and in the work of the traveller and historian Volney—are less notable, not least because substantial parts of them have been published before. Moravia seems to strive just a little too hard to attach Volney's approach to the study of distant lands and primitive societies to Condillac's psychology. Of course, Volney was, institutionally, an *idéologue*, a veteran of Auteuil, who warmly admired the *Traité des sensations*. Hence it would be absurd to deny the possibility of Condillacian roots for his *Voyage en Egypte et en Syrie* (1787). It is obviously possible to interpret the methodology of the *Voyage* as a two-stage process of description and synthesis, a process in which the analysis of every scene into its atomistic, component parts—the analogy is with Condillac's notion of complex human ideas built up from a mass of individual sensations—is followed by generalization; in particular, generalization concerning the relationship between different races and their physical environment. But is it not also possible to interpret Volney as simply an exemplar of trends that have no roots in Condillac, *idéologie*, or, for that matter, any other formalized philosophy?

After all, what we usually see as the salient features of the *Voyage*—the scientific character of Volney's observations and his eschewing of polite anecdotes of the strange and exotic, of the kind epitomised in the *Lettres sur l'Egypte* of his contemporary Savary—were hardly original by the 1780s. Nor were they peculiar either to *idéologie* or to France: witness the systematic instructions that were drawn up in 1768 to guide the Danish orientalist Carsten Niebuhr in his travels in Arabia. Moravia, of course, is fully aware of these more general tendencies, and he describes the eighteenth-century trend towards the "demystification" of foreign parts in absorbing detail. All I fear is that the general tendencies have not been given their due, as far as Volney is concerned, and that he has been forced into a mould, as a complete, quintessential *idéologue* which, philosophically, he does not quite fit.

Such qualms about the integrity of *idéologie* could be discounted if they were confined to Volney; but they are not. Consider, as an example (not discussed in this book), the plan for an all-embracing Republic of Letters that was enshrined in the new National Institute in 1795. A triumph for *idéologie*, as we are usually led to suppose? Possibly. After all, it was Daunou who sold the idea to the Convention in 1795. But have we distinguished clearly enough those ideals which have their source in *idéologie* from virtually identical ideals which, as Roger Hahn has observed, found almost universal support among French *savants* in the aftermath of Thermidor? Needless to say, such problems do not diminish the importance of the *idéologues* as a cultural barometer; but of their status as the formers of opinion and the mainsprings of action, I am more sceptical.

Faced with problems of demarcation such as those and with a monumental corpus of source material, Moravia has wisely opted for a selective, thematic approach: the four parts of the book, though they all explore aspects of the quest for a science of man (whether in psychology, physiology, anthropology, geography, or sociology), are best read as distinct contributions. Inevitably, his studies in certain areas leave untouched whole tracts of darkness, the most interesting of which, for me, lies in the shadowy area in which *idéologie*, with its biological and psychological orientation, confronted the "harder" more mathematical sciences and grew to maturity almost simultaneously in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. How, for example, did the *idéologues* view the development of the new chemistry once it had passed from the hands of its founder, Lavoisier (a member of the Société d'Auteuil), to those of Berthollet? And just what was the relationship between *idéologie*, unashamedly elitist and encyclopedic, and the more democratic, professional studies in engineering, mathematics, and the physical sciences that reached their apogee with the founding of the École Polytechnique in 1794?

These two very different relations may have grown independently of each other. But I doubt it. It is at least intriguing that Gaspard Monge, the creator of descriptive geometry and a founding father of the Polytechnique, was the leading editor of the *Encyclopédie méthodique*, whose massive volumes encapsulated so much of *idéologie*. Between 1782 and 1832, and there are several others, notably Lamarck, who, by firmly planting feet in both camps, present tantalizing historical problems.

In his preface, Moravia apologizes for not giving the comprehensive study of *Idéologie* that was envisaged at the time of *Il Tramonto*. He need not be so modest. For, for its lacunae, *Il Pensiero degli Idéologues* resoundingly ousts Picavet as our standard source. Moreover, it stands, methodologically, as an object-lesson for historians of ideas. For the verve and originality of this book are achieved, not by premature excursions into the higher reaches of interpretation, but by relentless attention to hard textual evidence, leaves one musing about his own life in Quimper (which he left at sixteen years of age, to return only for two brief spells long after his parents had died).

While Fréron's talents were rich, the extent of his achievement matched his limitations appear all the greater. Both he and Voltaire take on the shape of odious children in the hideous war-games; but Voltaire was meantime also writing *Candide* and defending Calas. Fréron's ungenerous comments on Voltaire's triumphant campaign for the rehabilitation of Calas are treated by Balcou with judicious severity. If they are not exceptional, nevertheless instance Fréron's essential parnasitism. For all his brilliance, he was feeding off men who, unlike him, possessed creative talent. The essential contrast is with Rousseau, who, equally at odds with Voltaire, pursued an independent line which arguably provided greater riches than his opponent.

The author is not unaware of these blinkers to Fréron's vision, though he tends to be a shade too indulgent about them. Where, however, he errs more in his kindness to Fréron is in his delineation of the two warring camps. Fréron has his share of troubles: prison, censorship, treacheries and growing isolation. The *philosophes* were far from gentlemanly in their pursuit of him. But, as the author falls to make clear, this was an ecclesiastical society in which the Church still held extraordinary authority; and the Church was for Fréron and against the Encyclopedists. One has but to read J. McManners's admirable inaugural lecture of 1974 at Oxford ("Reflections on the Decline of Bad of Voltaire: the Art of Dying in Eighteenth-Century France") to see the delicate line a *philosophe* like Voltaire had to tread in order to seek after peace and an easy life for him and his heirs. The Encyclopedic group held ascendancy in salon and Academy, but the personal position of each individual in that group was fraught with insecurities of a kind that Fréron never had to consider.

The author, then, leans a little too readily in Fréron's favour, and his research is not quite as complete as it might have been. Discussing Fréron's accusation of plagiarism against Voltaire's *Zadig*, he fails to use the classic edition by Asse. On the affair of Helvétius's *De l'esprit*, he ignores D. W. Smith's book. But those are mere blemishes in an intelligent work of major character.

Voltaire's victim

By H. T. Mason

JEAN BALCOU :
Fréron contre les philosophes
493pp. Geneva : Droz. Sw Fr 80.

Fréron's name has survived two centuries because he had the honour, outrivalling all others, of Voltaire's implacable hatred. But the man deserves to be remembered in his own right; and here at last is a biography which gives a balanced view of his personality. Thoroughly documented on Fréron's duties as well as life, Jean Balcou's *Fréron contre les philosophes* controls its mass of material with a light and elegant touch that compel the reader's interest, even in the more arid sections of the subject. Fréron the polemicist has suffered the fate at biographers' hands of being either championed for his support of Church and absolute State, or condemned for offending against the idols of the Enlightenment, Voltaire and the Encyclopedists. Rare were the exceptions that looked at him with unprejudiced eye (F. C. Green provided an almost unique example with a pioneering essay in 1929 that until now had not been surpassed).

This study, carried through chronologically, demonstrates the full impact of Fréron as journalist upon his era. From 1749 to his death in 1776 he edited a journal which appeared on average three times a month. The continuity of such an institution, the vigour of Fréron's views, the omnivorous curiosity he displayed, the low price of the review and the degree of its penetration throughout France and Europe, all these factors provided Fréron with a position of immense influence. M Balcou justifiably argues that the *Année littéraire* (which Fréron inaugurated in 1754) rivalled the *Encyclopédie* and its group for a quarter of a century, becoming in the end a sort of alternative French Academy, the original one having by then been taken over by the *philosophes*.

In many ways Fréron shared the interests of his enemies. Like them he was concerned to advance schemes of pragmatic reform that would ensure greater happiness. He favoured the claims of commerce, supported the development of science as key to knowledge of [illegible] nature and to self-knowledge, spoke eloquently for the oppressed peasantry and against wealthy proprietors, unemployed like Voltaire that cause of inoculation, pleaded for reconciliation between Catholics and Protestants (though his attitude towards religious toleration appears to have hardened with the years, a point on which M Balcou is, for once, less explicit than he might have been). All this could have brought him a safe place in the Encyclopedic fold, and he himself later claimed that he had been invited to contribute to the great dictionary.

But the gulf between him and them was unbridgeable. He supported Christian absolutism, they did not. He feared the anarchic consequences of throwing man back upon his own resources, deprived of the tranquillity and certitude afforded by the Church. So he increasingly found himself rallying support against the trends towards materialism. Bad as these were in themselves, they were directed by a group which he had to be bent on intellectual dictatorship. Hence the bitterness of his attack on *philosophie*, whose supreme ogre was Voltaire.

To reduce Fréron to being only the enemy of Voltaire is, then, the grossest distortion. Still, the feud lasted over thirty years; it remains one of the great quarrels of the century, rich in personal tones. Temperamentally, Fréron and Voltaire were much alike. Both excelled at polemical wit and irony, both pursued causes good and bad with well-nigh fanatical zeal. But Fréron was too arrogant to accept Voltaire as a master, Voltaire too proud to ignore or forgive his younger opponent. M Balcou brings out well the growing obsessiveness on each side, neither could leave the other alone, each committed acts of demeaning malignity at his opponent's expense. Voltaire emerges badly from this duel; but one must surely add that Fréron comes out even worse.

It was he who had begun the argument, probably for no better motive than ambition. No sure way existed to make his name quickly than to attack the great, and Fréron quickly provided himself with many eminent opponents. But the relationship with Voltaire became special, perhaps because of the likeness in personality. Voltaire was commented: the author, W. Smith, "double detester" of, but more than this, one sensing an medieval [illegible] literature which